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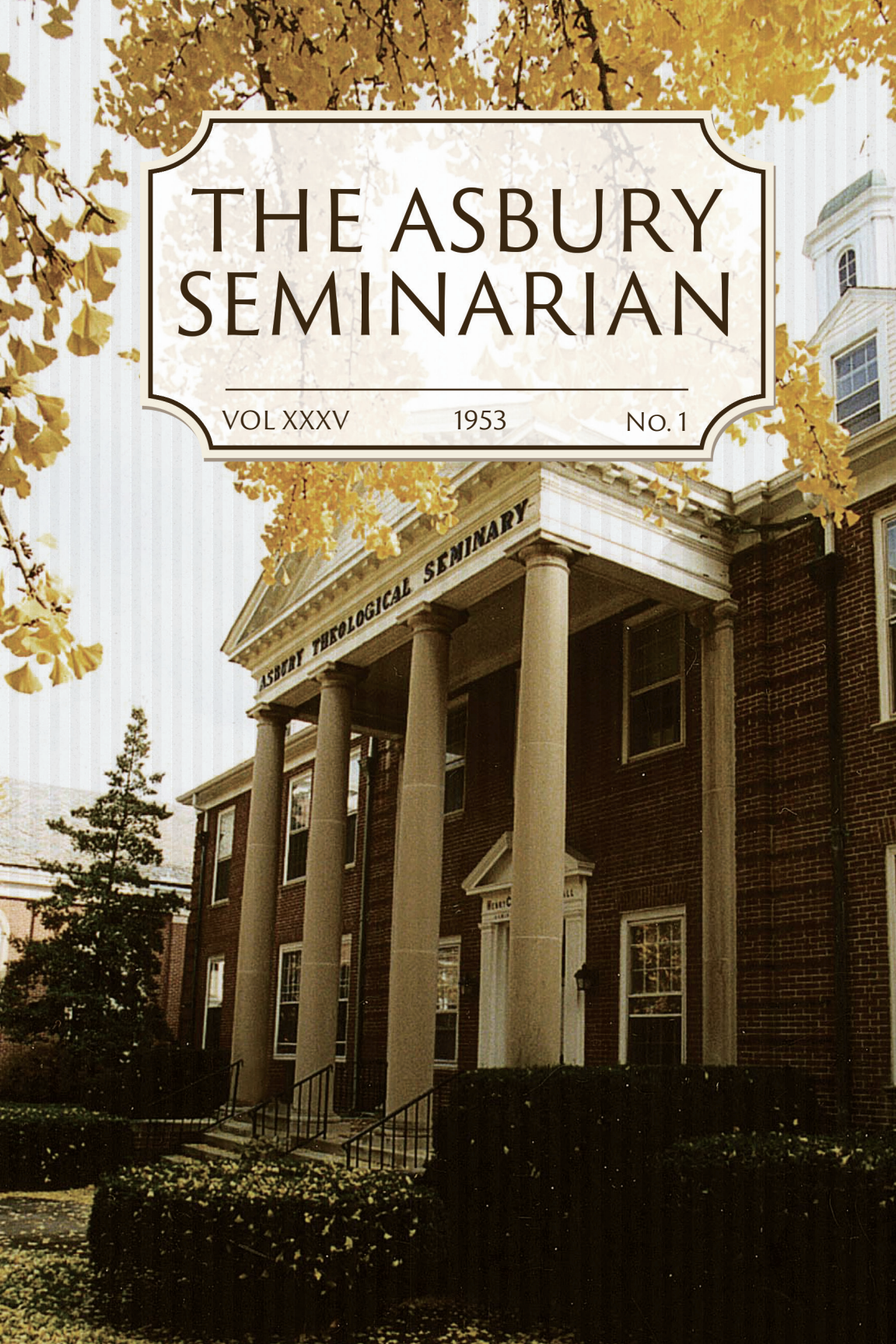

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The Wesleyan Message In The Life And Thought Of Today

The ASBURY SEMINARIAN

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Editorial - -

Christ and the Dictators

HAROLD B. KUHN

It is not pleasant to us, in our surroundings of freedom and relative tolerance, to realize that a majority of the earth's population live under the governance of dictatorial systems. Confronting the West, with its democratic traditions, are two configurations of political types: there is a series of semi-Fascist states, many of them essentially feudal in type, comprising much of West Africa, South America, Spain, India and Malaysia; and there is the walled-in Soviet dictatorship, extending from the Stettin-Trieste Line to the Chinese Sea. This latter realm of darkness is working feverishly, both above and below ground, to extend its cruel shadow over the entire world.

History affords us the perspective with which to see that our day is not the first in which dictatorship has menaced the world. Indeed, the term "Dictator" has not always been the fearsome thing which it has latterly become. In Greece, after the days of the overthrow of the hereditary sovereigns (*basileiai*), the *tyrannoi* were men, usually eminently respectable, who in times of great emergency obtained absolute power. The term was by no means unequivocally evil: it usually connoted the manner in which power was gained, rather than the manner in which it was exercised. The genial Pisistratus was thus called "the Tyrant," and only later did the term come to imply reproach.

In republican Rome, the *dictator* was a magistrate appointed by the Senate, in times of peril, to absolute authority. His constitutional powers expired at the end of three or six months. The Senate usually or always appointed a respectable member of Rome's aristocracy to this position, and before 60 B.C. no Roman *dictator* attempted to establish himself in a position of permanent power. It was when the Roman aristocracy became decadent that plebeian (the ancient counterpart of "proletarian") armies sought to elevate their generals to a place of complete power. Julius Caesar stands as the epitome of the newly-emerging dictator, one of many com-

peting generals who succeeded in overthrowing government by constitution and proceeded to exercise absolute power without the restrictions of constitutional government. In general, the thinkers of the ancient world rejected this theory of government. Only some of the Stoics accepted it, and even they did so upon metaphysical grounds, namely, that the constitution of the world made it inevitable that the "best man" should rise to the ascendancy. Plato and Aristotle had reprehended all despotisms, so that the latter even broke fellowship with his pupil, Alexander the Great, as he beheld the growing tendencies toward despotism in his government.

Nevertheless, Roman dictatorship became an accepted pattern in the post-Christian world, and the first three Christian centuries witnessed the development of most of the tactics which mark modern dictators. It is instructive to notice these tactics, and to set them in contrast to the principles for which the Christian Evangel stands.

Dictators have historically made large use of messianic promises, by which subjects are induced to overlook the woes and miseries of today in the hope of a bright future—perhaps generations ahead. As one has said, "If the Western world lives in debt to the past, the Soviet world lives in debt to the future." One of the pathetic factors in lands under modern tyrants is the glowing faith of the subjects in a radiant world of tomorrow—pehaps for children or grandchildren. —Pathetic, we say; for messianism under a false messiah is hardly likely to produce a millenium, even after long lapse of time.

While the foregoing technique is employed to keep subjets in a "contented" subjection, it is given a peculiar turn when applied to those more fortunate in their present conditions. Here the appeal is to the social, political, and economic psychoses which recur in a progressive society. Every grievance and very psychological uneasiness is inflated, until even prominent and prosperous members of relatively healthy societies become convinced that the present is dark and only a "strong hand" can produce a roseate sunrise tomorrow. One needs only to read the chronicle of communism in Hollywood to see the way in which some (though certainly not all, nor even most) of the most grossly overpaid individuals in America have inclined toward the left. Communist leaders have not overlooked the power of a conscience, bothered by too-large financial reward, to turn the individual sour and to distort his vision.

Personal frustrations, based upon every conceivable factor, are cleverly exploited by dictators, who seem scarcely to need any coaching in the art of steering malcontents into a course of persecution complex and toward a messianism based upon nihilism with respect to existing conditions and institutions. Those individuals who are "unhappy inside" are often easy prey to appeals from the "persecuted," however specious their grievances.

Dictators in the ancient world were quick to perceive the possible utility of religion to their cause. One of their crude efforts was in the direction of claiming religious sanction for their positions and finally for their persons. Disloyalty thus becomes robed with the fearsome aspect of sacrilege. With the decay of classical paganism, this type of appeal lost its force; and ancient dictatorships left the more modern varieties with the heavy task of fashioning their own equivalent to the "religious" appeal.

In modern systems of dictatorship, the "state," a ponderous and (to some) impressive entity, becomes the divinity. The realistic concept of the state, to which the individual must be radically subordinated, is basic to the tyrant. In the Nazi state, the primitive concept of the clan dominated political theory, and the system represented a curious blending of technical culture with rank tribalism. Those who came under the spell of this system did not doubt, at the time at least, that *das Volk* was a "real" entity, to whom individual persons owed much, and, if an emergency demanded it, everything.

The raw faith of Communists in the infallibility of the Soviet system is another tribute to the power of the idea of the "divine state" over the minds of some men. The story of Communism in America is an astounding testimony to the ability even of educated persons to adore the "state." One needs only watch the tortuous course of the Communist line—through the "honeymoon" period following 1933, the Russo-Finnish War, the days of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, the Nazi invasion of Russia, and the post-war period—to observe that devotion to the Soviet cause has a power over its devotees fully equivalent to that power which religion has over the minds and hearts of the faithful.

This tendency to view the state as a divinity leads, of course, to a complete subversion of the Christian ethic. To the devotee of the great Colossus, no scruples concerning truth or virtue must

impede effort to stamp out opposition and to entrench the power of the mighty Reality. Politically speaking, this type of thought makes more than one party an absurdity. If the *Party* is infallible, why *should* there be another? This accounts for the voluble protestations of "democracy" in the Soviet Union.

The use of elaborate and comprehensive systems of espionage against its own citizens is another staple of dictatorship. This, by the way, is not new. Says Epictetus: "An agent sits by you in ordinary dress and begins to speak ill of the ruler. Then you, as if you had received a pledge of his fidelity by his first beginning the abuse, say likewise what you think; and so you are led away in chains to execution." This has a strangely modern sound to any who know conditions in Germany between 1933 and 1945, or to those familiar with procedures behind the Iron Curtain today.

The objective of repressive measures is a total conquest of the human mind. To this end, the most brutal means of thought control are standard equipment with the contemporary dictator. Deviationism becomes the number one crime. "True" and "false" are wholly relative terms; truth is conceived instrumentally, so that a given proposition is true or false insofar as it contributes to the maintenance of the ruling clique in a position of power. In the conquest of the mind, terror and physical violence are (to the dictator) legitimate instruments. The "confessions" which are made by the accused at spy trials in Russia and in the satellite countries bear witness to the diabolical cleverness with which "unfriendly" elements are browbeaten and abused until the signing of the most absurd protestations of guilt appears as the only possible course of action.

The Christian world will be well advised to be realistic in its approach to these unpalatable techniques. The day is now long past when the thinking man can be expected to believe the bland explanation that such reports concerning Communist lands are the result of "capitalist propaganda." This is exactly what the present-day aspirants to world empire, directed from Moscow, would have us believe. Moreover, part of the present wave of hysteria in the United States may well be a reaction to the unrealistic attitude of our nation toward the Red menace from 1933 to 1946.

To return, however, to our original theme: vital Christianity must, by virtue of her essential message, be opposed to dictator-

ships, whether of the ancient or the modern variety. Some will argue that conflict will come only when and if Christianity associates herself with existing economic interests. This is a superficial view, which fails to take into account the real nature of the Christian message, which insists that there is an area of human loyalties which belong to God aolne. Nor is it enough to suggest that the basis for the conflict is some "belief in the infinite worth of personality." Certainly redeemed personality is precious in the sight of God. But a major problem in the modern world is that of maintaining a social order within which the free propagation of the Christian Evangel is possible, and in which believing men and women may live their lives in devotion to God.

Our faith is, that the gates of hell (even with the banner of Hammer and Sickle floating above them) will not prevail against the Church. It must be recognized, however, that the spread of the Evangel of Christ is vastly more effective under certain social and political conditions than under others. Moreover, the progressive encroachments of dictatorships upon the total life and thought are such as to make it exceedingly difficult to be a Christian in lands thus ruled. Probably the conflict between Christ and Caesar is more acute, in the long run, under Sovietism than under most of the other existing forms of "strong" government.

In any case, Christians will be well advised to remember that the issues between Christ and the dictators are not superficial, but that they are as deep as life itself and as numerous as the complex elements which make up human life. By the same token, the most effective resistance to Soviet Imperialism is not to be found in vast ecclesiastical institutions wielding earthly power, nor in embassies in Vatican City. Rather, it is the resistance which comes from men and women of clear vision whose hearts burn with devotion to Him who has a right to claim a total loyalty and total commitment.

H. B. K.

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The "New Look" In Contemporary Theology

The theological currents of the western world have shifted markedly in the last decade. While at Harvard (1942-45) the present writer noticed that the most eagerly welcomed campus preacher (and the most controversial) was Reinhold Niebuhr. As might be expected, the first clear convictions that a chapter in theological history had closed and a new one opened were voiced in meetings of younger theologians as in the Interseminary Movement (e.g., at Oxford, Ohio, in 1947). Protestant liberals have voiced protest at the shift in the direction of "neo-orthodoxy" (e.g., De Wolf, *The Religious Revolt Against Reason,* 1949). Conservatives have viewed the "new look" on the theological horizon with general distrust (e.g., Van Til, *The New Modernism,* 1948). The recognition that it was time for a change is now quite general. A. S. Nash has collected a series of extremely interesting essays showing the extent of change in virtually every area of the theological field (*Protestant Thought in the Twentieth Century,* 1951). Anderson has shown the way toward *Rediscovering the Bible* (the Association Press, 1951) in what may be a successor to Fosdick, *A Guide to Understanding the Bible.* Now that "the dust has settled" it may be confidently asserted that we have reached the end of an era in western theological thought.

The group that has been most affected by the change is the humanists and their fellow-travellers. This group sees in the present "revolt against reason" merely the result of fear psychology. They can point to parallels in other centuries when millenial expectations and apocalyptic hopes coincided with times of crisis. The candor of many liberals is commendable. A. C. McGiffert, Jr., recently described himself to the University of Illinois as a "reconstructed liberal." Walter Horton of Oberlin is willing to call himself a "repentant liberal." Morton Scott Enslin of Crozier whimsically alludes to himself as an "old fashioned" liberal. There are many others who will readily admit that their 'minds have changed" markedly in the last decade. A bland liberalism which regards man as essentially good and progress inevitable is not flourishing in war-blighted Europe and Asia.

There are some intimations of an altered emphasis among ultra-conservative groups. Among these there is an increasing willingness to subordinate cherished dogmas to facts. There is often evident a new earnestness and boldness in welcoming new light from all sources regardless of modifications which it may compel. Among them also is a large measure of appreciation for the new emphasis upon man's sinfulness, and need of salvation, which the "theology of crisis" has promoted.

The violent extremes in the theological pendulum between liberal and conservative, which characterized the last half-century, is now likely to give way to a greater degree of synthesis. This situation may create a theological atmosphere in which the Biblical evangel of God's grace to sinful men will find an easier hearing. Such, at least, seems to be the present trend.

In this period of rapid transition, adherents of the historical Wesleyan tradition must orient themselves. With the "neo-orthodox" in the Calvinistic tradition they affirm the estrangement of man from God and his desperate need of salvation. They believe, however, that God is not so exclusively transcendant, nor man so destitute of good will, that reconciliation is virtually impossible. Instead they hold that a proper emphasis upon the grace of God will resolve the tension involved in the "divine-human encounter" and effect full reconcilation. With the "fundamentalists" they can affirm the integrity and complete trustworthiness of the Bible as against both "neo-orthodoxy" and "liberalism." With the liberals they adhere to the worth of the individual but insist upon his native depravity and debility. With them also they recognize that "he who loves God should love his brother also." This position is not an attempt at eclecticism or a mere synthesis. It comes rather from a recognition that the proper grasp of the New Testament doctrine of *grace* holds to the sinfulness of man and his worth and salvability, on the one hand, and on the other to the love of God in Christ which makes the divine life operative in human personality. Even the complex tensions of the modern world will be resolved when men return to the grace of God in Christ. Perhaps, at long last, contemporary theology will assist the evangelist in popularizing this conviction. The articles in this number, amid their diversity, agree in this hope for the next generation.

G. A. T.

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Concerning This Issue

As readers will notice, this issue of *The Asbury Seminarian* presents a new format. Over a year ago the publishers of this journal thought it best to change it, for the present at least, from a quarterly to an annual publication. One advantage of the change is that it permits a volume more convenient in size for shelving. It also facilitates greater unity among the articles presented. In the present issue, integration around a central theme has been sought without infringing upon the freedom of each individual contributor. Most of the articles in this issue are related, more or less directly, to the theme—the Wesleyan Message in the Life and Thought of Today. Because this is primarily a theological journal several features of earlier issues of the *Seminarian*—the President's Message, the Dean's Letter, and the Alumni Page—are being transferred to the new news bulletin of the Asbury Theological Seminary Alumni Association.

The absence of the Editor, Dr. Harold B. Kuhn, now on sabbatical leave in Germany, made it impossible for him to collaborate in the active work of producing this volume. His editorial, "Christ and the Dictators," reflects his contact, during several post-war visits, with the effects of tyranny on the life of a modern nation.

It is our hope that our readers will welcome these changes and that the journal will continue to make a contribution to contemporary religious thought.

The price or this volume is one dollar. Adjustments with subscribers will extend their subscription proportionately.

THE ASBURY SEMINARIAN COMMITTEE

OXFORD TALES: Reports Of Recent Pilgrims

British Methodism As I Saw It

Z. T. JOHNSON

A casual visitor to the British Isles would not have the opportunity of observing Methodism in the same manner as would a delegate to the Ecumenical Methodist Conference at Oxford, England. This session was held for a ten-day period beginning August 28, 1951, with about 1,000 delegates and visitors present from all over the world. It proved to be a meeting of great interest from many angles. It afforded a splendid opportunity for the writer to observe British Methodism.

The churches are interesting. In the minds of the British there is a division between churches and chapels. One Methodist preacher guide told us that in Bristol there was a church which held to all the traditions and majored on ritual and fine music. When we passed another church building in another part of town, he stated that this was, in reality, a Wesley chapel rather than a church, and explained that the music there did not hold to traditional standards, but catered to young people and a popular style of singing. When asked about the attendance in the two churches, however, he indicated that it was very sparse in the church, but that the chapel was full each Sunday.

The British ministry is divided into two groups—the ordained ministers and the lay ministers. There are many more lay ministers than ordained. When inquiry was made about the preachers wearing clerical garb, the explanation was that this was the only way to distinguish between the ordained minister and the lay minister, and that it was customary for the ordained man to wear his clerical garb at all times, especially when attending any type of church service. The lay minister is held in high regard, and there is no reflection on his ministry by the ordained men. Usually there are a number of lay ministers who assist the pastor in holding the services on the various circuits. The churches are usually organized on the circuit basis, sometimes one superintendent pastor having as many as 25 or 30 churches under his direction. In one case, a

circuit has 29 chapels which are served by two ordained ministers and three lay ministers. Arrangements are made so that a service is held in each church at least once every Sunday.

British ministers receive a uniform salary. At the present time it is 400 pounds, which in American money is $1120. In addition to this, they have a parsonage. In the cities and largest circuits, the superintendent pastor is granted an additional allowance to help take care of his transportation expenses. This is really a very meager living, and British ministers are comparatively poor with opportunity to enjoy very few of the luxuries of life.

The laymen are given more definite responsibility in the churches than is ordinarily found in this country. The stewards seem to have more authority and take greater initiative in looking after matters of the church, including such things as taking the offerings, seating the people, and providing for entertainment and transportation.

Most of the churches follow the style initiated by John Wesley with the pulpit in the center and with very few evidences of ritualistic furniture. Explanation was made by one pastor to the effect that British Methodism lays emphasis upon consecrated personality rather than upon consecrated furniture. The pulpit in the center is always a reminder that preaching is more essential than ritual. This, of course, grows out of the revolt from the church of England which always has the divided pulpit. The writer observed, however, that most of the churches have an altar back of the pulpit which resembles the high altar in the churches of England.

One of the most striking things about British Methodist churches is that most of them seem to have been built to house from one-fourth to one-half more people than they have members. One British preacher, who had been in America preaching for the summer, stated that he was astonished to find that a church of 1,200 had built an auditorium costing $200,000 which seated only 800. He stated that in England this would have been reversed. A church having 800 members would have built an auditorium to seat 1,200 so that the unsaved and friends of other denominations might visit their church. Inquiry about church attendance in England, however, indicated that on the average the attendance relative to membership was somewhat higher than in America, but this applied usually to the evening service rather than to the Sunday morning hours of worship.

God and the Nations

L. R. Marston

"Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh: is there anything too hard for me?" — *Jeremiah* 32:27.

The world is at its extremity, seemingly a hopeless extremity. We have international strife; there is corruption in the body politic; personal morality drags in the gutter; confusion if not treachery is exhibited by world leaders. The ominous rhythm of marching hosts is the insistent undertone of daily events. The fires of Moloch glow red for the sacrifice of the world's finest youth. Men's hearts are failing them for fear, and even Christians despair of the noble experiment called civilization.

The world's sin-sickness seems past remedy. The world is done! — burnt out at the center by the raging fire of sin, and soon to be burnt up by the judgment of an angry God. Can God prevail against the sweeping tides of sin without utterly destroying the earth in cataclysmic judgment?

The Blight of Sin

I have seen the blight of sin on the nations of Europe. I have seen the destruction that an unholy war has wrought on great cities such as London—a destruction that swept homes as well as munitions factories, that snuffed out the lives of babes and helpless children along with criminals, that wrecked churches along with brothels.

And I have seen the wreckage of Berlin, so vast that decades and generations will be required to remove the rubble and rebuild; and scars will remain for the duration of time. Great areas of Berlin have been pounded to powder. Proud monuments that once vaunted German conquests have been laid low. This great city, built upon sandy, marshy flats, is to have its mountain, built of non-salvable rubble. The vast base of that mountain has already been laid and trucks carry the city's debis up a serpentine road to the mountain's

growing summit. Yes, Berlin is building a mountain of its ruins, a costly monument to sin's madness.

I have seen Dachau, utterly depressing, where multiplied thousands of Hitler's victims died by horrible violence. I have seen Dachau's death chamber, its gas chamber, its crematory furnaces, the place of execution by pistol fire, the base of the old gallows, and the "hanging tree" now itself dead — a stark, somber ghost. I have read the Dachau motto over the door, "Never again!" But I cannot escape the haunting lesson that Dachau teaches concerning the corruption of unregenerate human nature, nor its warning that wickedness "on the loose" is capable of future multiplied Dachaus.

Drop down the map of Europe to Rome. In the suburbs of this ancient city I have seen the cave to which hundreds of Rome's residents disappeared mysteriously from the city's streets during World War II, their mangled and decomposed bodies later to be discovered where Hitler's machine-guns had poured a stream of lead into the cavern's mass of humanity in wholesale murder.

And near this modern cave of horrors I have groped my way along the subterranean galleries of the catacombs where early Christians gathered in the presence of thousands of their dead to worship God in secret with a measure of uncertain safety.

I have looked across the Circus Maximus to the Palace of the Caesars on the Palatine Hill. From the balconies of that Palace. royalty cheered as Christians in the circus below were torn apart by the lions.

Below the Palace of the Caesars on the opposite side of the Palatine Hill I have seen the ruins of the Roman Forum with its remnants of the Basilica Julian where the Apostle Paul was tried and condemned to death. And I have followed portions of the course by which Paul was led from the city through a gate now named in his honor; and outside the city walls I have looked upon the spot where his head rolled from his body as his neck was cleft asunder by the executioner's ax.

The evidences of brutality, of bestiality, of lust and violence are many in this sin-fevered world.

God's Judgment Upon Sin

There are evidences also of God's judgment upon sin. The glory that was Rome has faded. The empire of the Caesars has

been brought to judgment in history, and the Caesars themselves now suffer the judgments of eternity. Mussolini, who would be successor to the Caesars, has been judged, and the balcony from which he loved to address Italy in the presence of the great monuments of history is today just another balcony, silent and ordinary.

Distant rumblings of judgment against the Church that has so betrayed the tender and compassionate Christ, and has perverted the simple faith of Rome's early martyrs, can now be heard before that judgment strikes in fury. Humanly, there is no hope for Italy's oppressed masses, and revolution can be averted only by a reforming revival of religion.

God's judgment was visited upon the wicked city of Pompeii nearly nineteen centuries ago. This ancient city of great wealth and culture was overtaken at the height of its prosperity by a strange doom which preserved it for exploration in our day. I have walked the streets of this excavated city, and have viewed its baths, and have seen its temple ruins, and have looked through its houses. The elaborateness of domestic arrangements, the magnificence and elegance of the city's dwellings, and the advanced development even of its plumbing amaze and humble the modern traveler.

But coupled with luxury and advanced civilization in Pompeii was a moral corruption, the evidences of which was sealed by the city's doom to be opened in modern times — such evidence of corruption that guides may not disclose it to mixed groups even in this sophisticated age. Yes, judgment for its vileness came upon Pompeii, even as upon Sodom in the days of Lot.

Modern history speaks of judgment as well. In those long years of the early 'forties the judgment of Hitler seemed to tarry, but now in the sweeping perspective of history how brief was Hitler's day of dominance. Near the Austrian border in southeastern Bavaria, I was taken by Chaplain R. C. Hayes and military car up a lovely mountain-side of the Bavarian Alps — lovely until we reached a scene of weird desolation and destruction. We came first upon a great hotel in ruins; this had been Hitler's mountain guesthouse. Above these ruins we saw the shattered barracks of Hitler's proud storm-troopers. Then we drove to the back yard of Hermann Goering's once lovely mountain home, now desolate in stark ruins. Nearby we explored the massive wreckage of Hitler's palatial villa.

A few days later in Berlin, three or four hundred miles to the north, I looked from an American army bus in the Communist

sector upon the site of the Chancellery and saw, lifted above the debris, the concrete bunkers Hitler had built for his last-ditch safety and that of his intimates. Here Hitler met his death. He has been judged in history; he is being judged in eternity!

But there is the irony of Paris: proud Paris; gay Paris; wicked Paris; seemingly untouched by war and maintaining yet her beauty. There sin, unblushing, walks abroad. Why a wrecked London, a ruined Liverpool, a blasted Naples, a shattered Munich, a pulverized Berlin, when sinful Paris swaggers still in impudent freedom from judgment?

When I recall Paris, I share the Psalmist's complaint against the wicked whom he saw "in great power and spreading himself like a green bay tree." But judgment, although delayed, is certain, and one day the Psalmist's further words concerning the wicked will be applied to Paris: "Yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not: the end of the wicked shall be cut off."

In the face of all the evil of the world, can God establish righteousness? Can He save our civilization from destruction and mankind from collapse into savagery?

The Lesson from Jeremiah

More and more I am convinced that we find answers to the world's great problems in the revealed Word, not by blind chance which opens the Bible to particular passages to be taken out of their context and literally applied, but by intelligent and reverent study of the Word to discover and apply its great underlying truths, its sweeping compelling convictions.

On my home ward voyage I was forcibly struck by a passage from Jeremiah, and as later I reflected thereon my European erperiences assumed the perspective I now attempt to convey to others.

In Jeremiah's day affairs in Judah were in an exceedingly sad state. Following a period of reform under the good king, Josiah, the nation quickly and completely backslid into idolatry and rebellion against the law. Josiah's reforms had not been spiritual revival; he had imposed and enforced outward righteousness upon a people whose hearts had not been changed, and after his death the reaction was extreme.

By nature Jeremiah was timid and retiring, but the call of God was upon him and with unswerving loyalty he carried out God's

commission, "thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatever I command thee thou shalt speak." Jeremiah's devotion to God and God's people led him to say hard things, declaring the judgments of God against sin and rebellion. For this he was rejected by his nation, his village, his family. Having prophesied that Jerusalem would fall under the siege that had been laid against it by the Chaldeans, Jeremiah was imprisoned for alleged treason.

Under such circumstances God instructed him to purchase a piece of land in his family village of Anathoth near Jerusalem. Ever obedient, Jeremiah complied, notwithstanding the impending fall of the city following which, no doubt, property would be confiscated by the conquerors and the inhabitants of the city would be carried away captive.

The record as given in the thirty-second chapter tells how Jeremiah bought the land from a kinsman, weighed out to him the silver, and executed "the evidence of the purchase" in duplicate before witnesses. He then instructed Baruch, his scribe, to deposit these documents in an earthen vessel for preservation according to the practice of those times. "For thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; houses and fields and vineyards shall be possessed again in this land."

What a meaningless transaction: a prisoner for treason, buying land in a doomed city with all the legal technicalities and formalities that would be proper if Judah and Jerusalem were to stand forever! It seems that after the transaction Jeremiah himself was tested in his faith, and went to the Lord in prayer. His opening declaration, even by its strong assertion, suggests the temptation to doubt that assailed him. He exercised his "will to believe," as did the man who once said to Jesus, "Lord, I believe: help thou mine unbelief." Here are Jeremiah's words:

"Oh, Lord God! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee." (v. 17)

The prophet proceeded to review the cause of God's gracious dealings with Judah, Judah's miserable backsliding, and the judgment that was about to fall upon Jerusalem. He concludes:

"And thou hast said unto me, O Lord God, 'Buy thee the field for money, and take witnesses;' for (whereas) the city is given into the hand of the Chaldeans." (v. 25)

And God answered in the words that prefaced our opening and which we now repeat:

"Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh: is there anything too hard for me? (v. 27)

Then the Lord reviewed the backslidings of Judah, but added:

> Men shall buy fields for money, and subscribe evidences, and seal them, and take witnesses in the land of Benjamin, and in the places about Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, and in the cities of the mountains, and in the cities of the valley, and in the cities of the south: for I will cause their captivity to return, saith the Lord. (v. 44) . . . Again there shall be heard in this place which ye say shall be desolate without man and without beast, even in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem . . . the voice of joy, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegrom and the voice of the bride, the voice of them that shall say, "Praise the Lord of hosts: for the Lord is good; for his mercy endureth forever . . ." (33:10-11 in part)

Thus Jeremiah preached and prophesied not only God's judgments, but likewise His love and mercy. From the sad aftermath of Josiah's reforms, Jeremiah well knew the futility of moral reform without spiritual rebirth, and through him God already had declared the New Covenant:

"I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people." (31:33)

Jeremiah's obedience in purchasing the field under the very shadow of judgment on Judah's violation of the Old Covenant was a dramatic assertion of his faith in the New Covenant. God has never abrogated the New Covenant, but rather has reaffirmed it in the record of the New Testament again and again.

God Can!

Men once claimed the support of Scripture for a doctrine of personal determinism according to which many were elected to damnation. Reaction followed this harsh doctrine, giving dominance to a doctrine of inevitable progress consummating in a millenium of righteousness. But under this delusion of beneficent determinism the social order rapidly descended into paganism until explosive eruptions of savagery dispelled this blind faith in inevitable progress.

Let us not stumble into yet a third fatalistic error toward which the prevailing mood of theological reaction tends. I refer to that dispensational determinism which paralyzes Christian faith by its despair of the gospel's power in our age to meet human need

through spiritual revival and social reform born of revival, and which admits no alternative to early destruction of the present world-order by God's inexorable judgment against sin.

God is not yet done with man on this earth if only man will accept God's claim upon him. Let it again be said — God has not abrogated the New Covenant. He awaits man's response to proffered mercy that He may validate that covenant in this desperate day. God's judgments do no violence to His mercy, for those judgments may be averted by man's repentance, even as the promises of God are contingent upon man's obedience. If we but listen, we shall hear with Jeremiah the Lord's promise, "I will cause their captivity to return", and "Again there shall be heard .... the voice of joy, and the voice of gladness, ... the voice of them that shall say, Praise the Lord of hosts: for the Lord is good; for his mercy endureth forever .... ."

Christians have no business closing shop and yielding to the paralysis of despair because sin abounds, for where sin abounds there may grace much more abound. Rather than submerging me in pessimism, my experiences and observations in Europe have challenged my faith, and my courage was inspired by tokens of God's grace bestowed even in the midst of wretchedness and sin.

In Germany Pastor Scholz is carrying on a great work even in the Russian Zone where he superintends Methodist churches. During the war he was bombed out of his church and home in the heart of Berlin, but from the rubble and ruin of the former church has arisen a greater church as the center of German Methodism.

In Berlin also I visited Bible institutes or seminars which train young women for child evangelism. Many of the students are war orphans from the Russian Zone who courageously return to their own people to serve in kindergartens, recreation centers and in home evangelism.

I have expressed my perplexity that Paris seemingly has escaped judgment. Is it because of the "ten righteous"? For in Paris I found the "City of Refuge" — a great Salvation Army center where the gospel of redemption is preached. There I heard radiant testimonies and a gospel message under which seekers knelt at an old-fashioned penitent form. This in wicked Paris!

In poor, priest-ridden Italy, under the shadow of Vesuvius and near the beautiful Bay of Naples, I was guest in a one-time fashionable villa where now a school is conducted for former

priests and seminarians of Catholicism who are seeking to become Protestant preachers. And I have preached to an eager and responsive mission audience gathered from a wretched boat-building suburb of Naples where courageous workers challenge the Church of Rome with the gospel.

In Methodism's Central Hall, London, I attended sessions of the city-wide evangelistic campaign, organized to give a spiritual emphasis to the Festival of Britain. There I heard searching gospel messages, one of them by the Anglican Bishop of Barking.

The program of the World Conference of Methodism in Oxford commemorated in large measure the man whose heart-warming thawed England from the icy chill of the religious formalism of the 18th century, and sparked a revival to produce radical moral and social reforms that swung the entire course of English history from its former road to revolution. A high point of the Oxford conference was the sermon by Dr. Sangster which held spellbound a crowded house as he gave in clear outline the essentials of the Methodist message. A second mountain-peak was reached in a morning session on evangelism when Professor Pawson brought the most spiritually stirring message of the ten days. In the holy hush that followed the climaxing conclusion, the chairman with great discernment called on the speaker to lead in prayer. And we were lifted to the very throne of God!

I have seen the pulpits, outdoor and indoor, of Wesley and Whitefield; the market-cross and the tomb of Wesley's father at Epworth where John Wesley preached; City Road Chapel in London and the site of the Foundery which preceded it as Methodism's center; the New Room at Bristol; Whitefield's chapel in Bristol and another he built in the Kingswood suburb; the site of the brick-fields in Bristol where John Wesley yielded his high-church prejudices and first preached in the fields — O so many places have I trod where the early saints of Methodism walked and labored and preached and suffered — and proved that God could deliver from evil and corruption in the eighteenth century, and will stay His judgments when men repent!

How then can I doubt that all this will happen again in the twentieth century if God can find yielded human channels and if men will respond with repentance to the offer of grace! As in Paul's day, and again in Wesley's, the gospel in our day is the power of God unto salvation.

Methodism's Ecumenical Perspective

FRANK BATEMAN STANGER

An American church historian, not a Methodist, remarked that John Wesley was the most ecumenically-minded of all the great reformers.[1] Hence, it follows logically that the Methodist Movement has been marked visibly by the imprint of the ecumenical tendencies of its founder and father.

THE MEANING OF "ECUMENICAL PERSPECTIVE"

At the outset it is imperative that we have clearly in mind the meaning of the term "ecumenical" and that we understand what is meant by an "ecumenical perspective." Etymologically speaking, the term "ecumenical" means "universal" or "world-wide." Some one suggested that the best definition of "ecumenical" is that it is the Protestant word for "catholic." The following definitive analysis by President John A. Mackay is both illuminating and adequate: "The Ecumenical Movement is the fulfillment by the Christian Church of its total task, on a world front, in the spirit of Christian unity."[2]

THE ECUMENICAL MIND AND SPIRIT OF JOHN WESLEY

Let us study this definition of ecumenicity and discover wherein it is justifiable to speak of John Wesley, the Father of Methodism, as intensely ecumenically-minded. In this statement concerning the Ecumenical Movement quoted above, four universals become apparent immediately: (1) The Church of Christ; (2) The Whole Gospel; (3) The World View; (4) The Spirit of Christian Unity.

Our study of John Wesley will lead us to conclude that he was ecumenically-minded because of his affirmations, both in doctrine and deed, concerning each of these ecumenical universals. He was a

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[1] Anderson, W. K. (ed), *Methodism,* p. 283.

[2] *The Interseminary Series,* Vol. II, Bk. 4, p. 40.

member of the Church of Christ in the catholic tradition, and he hesitated persistently to break with the Church of England. He proclaimed the whole Gospel in all of its applicable aspects. The world was his parish. He was concerned deeply for fellowship with all those whose hearts were one in Christian essentials even though they differed in their opinions.

John Wesley And the Church of England

From the earliest days of his childhood John Wesley was under the religious influence of the Church of England. He grew up in the Established Church. The father of John Wesley was the Rev. Samuel Wesley, an ordained minister of the Church of England and for nearly forty years the rector of Epworth Parish in Lincolnshire.

The mother of John Wesley was Susanna Wesley, whom all the world recognizes as the greatest single human factor in Wesley's life. She was the daughter of Dr. Samuel Annesley, a Dissenting minister, and one of the many sufferers under the cruel law of Non-conformity. However, at the early age of thirteen she deliberately conformed to the Church of England, thus leaving the Dissenters and uniting with the Established Church.

The education of the Wesley children was almost entirely entrusted to Mrs. Wesley. The religious training of the children, of course, received her most careful attention. She prepared for them an admirably clear body of explanation upon the Catechism and the Creed, and she was accustomed to meet them separately once a week, at a specified time, for an hour of religious conversation and instruction. Thus, the entire childhood of John Wesley was lived in a religious environment, and the dominant religious influence was that of the Church of England. He was a son of the Rectory and the Church at Epworth.

In January 1714 John Wesley was entered as a gown-boy in the Charterhouse School of London. While there he affirmed that he read his Bible and said his prayers every day, and that he took the Sacrament with devout regularity.

Wesley was admitted as a commoner at Christ Church College, Oxford, on July 13, 1720. Whatever religious influence there was at Oxford, however slight it may have been at this time,[3] was that of the Church of England.

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[3] Winchester, C. T., *The Life of John Wesley*, p. 18.

Through the early months of 1725 Wesley was making up his mind to take orders in the Established Church. His father, at first, counseled delay, cautioning him not to enter the priest's office to have a piece of bread; but his mother, with better knowledge of her son, felt sure that he would never take such obligations upon himself from unworthy motives, and warmly advised him to take deacon's orders as soon as possible. In the autumn the decisive step was taken; John Wesley was ordained deacon by Bishop Potter on September 17, 1925.

In March 1726 Wesley was elected Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford. In 1727 Wesley left Oxford to become curate in the parish of Wroote, the parish adjoining the parish of Epworth, and for which his father was also responsible. In 1728 Wesley was ordained a presbyter in the Church of England. He returned to Oxford in 1729, and remained in Lincoln College until the end of 1735.

In the fall of 1729 John Wesley, after his return to Oxford, became the recognized leader of what is known as the Holy Club, a group of individuals of earnest religious purpose who banded themselves together into a society in order to lead a more strict and disciplined religious life. There were but four members at first: John Wesley, Charles Wesley, Robert Morgan and Robert Kirkham. The number varied from time to time, once rising as high as twenty-nine; but when Wesley left Oxford in 1735 there were fourteen. The two members of the Holy Club who probably exerted the greater influence upon John Wesley at this time were John Clayton and Robert Morgan. It was Clayton from whom Wesley derived many of the High Church notions he entertained at the time; it was Morgan who introduced him to the work of practical benevolence.

Wesley, writing under the title *A Short History of Methodism,* has this to say about the members of the Holy Club:

"They were all zealous members of the Church of England; not only tenacious of all her doctrines, so far as they knew them, but of all her discipline, to the minutest circumstance."[4]

Then again, in his *Thoughts Upon Methodism,* Wesley declares:

"They were all zealous members of the Church of England,

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[4] *Selections From the Writings of the Rev. John Wesley, M.A.,* Welch, Herbert (ed.), p. 205.

and had no peculiar opinions, but were distinguished only by their constant attendance on the church and sacrament.'"[5]

In 1735 Wesley left England for two years to go as a missionary for the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel to the Indians in the new colony of Georgia in America. Here are his own words in a later article entitled *Farther Thoughts on Separation From the Church*:

> I went to America, strongly attached to the Bible, the primitive Church, and the Church of England, from which I would not vary in one jot or tittle on any account whatever. In this spirit I returned as regular a clergyman as any in the three kingdoms.[6]

In view of this discussion it seems logical to summarize the relationship of John Wesley to the Church of England previous to his Aldersgate experience in 1738 in the following words of Faulkner:

> It is acknowledged on all hands that previous to his conversion in 1738 Wesley was an ardent High Churchman. He recommended confession, he practiced weekly communion, he observed all the festivals and the fasts on Wednesdays and Fridays, he mixed the sacramental wine with water, and in other respects anticipated the churchly enthusiasm of the Oxford reformers of 1833.[7]

After his Aldersgate experience, and until the end of his life, John Wesley considered himself a devoted member of the Church of England.

The question of the relationship of the Methodist Movement to the Church of England was always present in the mind of Wesley. Time and time again he refers to it in his writings, and year after year it was discussed at his Conferences.

Wesley was as faithful in his attendance at the regular services of the Established Church as his labors and travels would permit. His *Journal* contains a large number of references to the fact that he had attended the regular church services on a particular day in a particular place.[8] Just so, he repeatedly urged the members

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[5] *Selections From the Writings of the Rev. John Wesley, M.A.*, Welch, Herbert (ed.), p. 205.

[6] Ibid., p. 288.

[7] Faulkner, John A., *Wesley As Sociologist, Theologian, Churchman*, pp. 85, 86.

[8] *The Heart of John Wesley's Journal*, Parker, P. L. (ed.), pp. 109, 151, 152, 170, 220, 251, 252, 277, 357.

of the Methodist Societies to attend the regular services of the Church of England.[9] And in order to encourage this practice of attending the regular services of the Church of England, Wesley insisted that the hours of the Methodist meetings should not be the same as those of the services of the Established Church.[10]

Wesley always had a sincere love and a profound respect for the Church of England. In his article on *Farther Thoughts on Separation From the Church* he declared:

> Next after the primitive Church, I esteemed our own, the Church of England, as the most Scriptural National Church in the world. I therefore not only assented to all the doctrines, but observed all the Rubric in the Liturgy; and that with all possible exactness, even at the peril of my life.[11]

In a letter to Sir Harry Trelawney Wesley wrote:

> Having had an opportunity of seeing several of the churches abroad, and having deeply considered the several sorts of Dissenters at home, I am fully convinced that our own Church, with all her blemishes, is nearer the Scriptural plan than any other in Europe.[12]

In a *Sermon on the Ministerial Office* Wesley said:

> I hold all the doctrines of the Church of England. I love her liturgy. I approve her plan of discipline, and only wish it could be put in execution. I do not knowingly vary from any rule of the Church, unless in those few instances, where I judge, and as far as I judge, there is an absolute necessity.[13]

In a letter to Mr. Walter Churchey, written later in his life, Wesley said:

> Dr. Coke made two or three little alterations in the prayer book without my knowledge. I took particular care throughout, to alter nothing merely for altering' sake. In religion, I am for as few innovations as possible. I love the old wine best.[14]

Nor did Wesley ever believe that the Methodist Movement was in any way undermining the Church of England. Rather, he

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[9] *The Journal of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M.,* (Standard Edition—Curnock, N., ed.), Vol. VII, p. 516.

[10] Ibid., p. 217.

[11] *Selections From the Writings of the Rev. John Wesley, M.A.,* Welch, Herbert (ed.), p. 287.

[12] Ibid., p. 287.

[13] Ibid., p. 287.

[14] Ibid., p. 287.

contended that the Methodist Societies in their efforts for revival and reformation were really defending and helping the Established Church. In his treatise entitled *An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion,* Wesley wrote:

> That is the very proposition I undertake to prove: — that we are now defending the Church, even the Church of England, in opposition to all those who either secretly undermine or more openly attempt to destroy it.[15]

Likewise, in his *Reasons Against a Separation From the Church of England,* Wesley contended:

> We look upon ourselves, not as the authors or ringleaders of a particular sect or party (it is the farthest thing from our thoughts); but as messengers of God to those who are Christians in name, but Heathens in heart and in life, to call them back to that from which they are fallen, to real genuine Christianity.[16]

Throughout his entire life Wesley urged the Methodists not to separate from the Church of England. We note the following words of Wesley written in 1790:

> Nay, I continually and earnestly cautioned them against it; reminding them that we were a part of the Church of England, whom God had raised up, not only to save our own souls, but to enliven our neighbors, those of the Church in particular.[17]

Keeping in mind the above statements which reveal the general attitude of John Wesley after 1738 toward the Church of England, we now proceed to a more detailed and chronological study of Wesley's relationship to the Established Church.

In June 1744, at the first meeting of the Methodist preachers in Conference, Wesley exhorted them to keep to the Church, remarking, that "this was their peculiar glory — not to form any new sect, but, remaining in their own Church to do all men all the good they possibly could."[18] At the important Conference held at Leeds in 1755, both John Wesley and his brother Charles with equal earnestness deprecated the tendency toward Dissent which so often had revealed itself among the preachers.[19]

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[15] Ibid., p. 227.

[16] Ibid., p. 289.

[17] Ibid., p. 289.

[18] Ibid., p. 289.

[19] *The Journal of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M.,* (Standard Edition—Curnock, N., ed.), Vol. IV, pp. 106, 115, 116.

A most important document is the letter of Wesley to the Rev. Samuel Walker, a zealous clergyman in Truro, written after the Conference of 1755. At the outset of this letter Wesley states the following reasons which had been urged by some of the preachers at the Conference in support of separation from the Established Church: (1) It is both absurd and sinful to declare such an assent and consent to the liturgy of the Established Church as is required to it, however excellent it may be; (2) they could not confine themselves merely to the use of forms; (3) the decretals of the Church were the very dregs of popery and many of the canons as grossly wicked as absurd; (4) they feared that many of the Church of England ministers neither lived the gospel, taught it, nor knew it; (5) consequently, the doctrines preached by these clergymen were fundamentally wrong.

The remainder of the contents of this letter from Wesley to Walker reveal the following facts: (1) The Conference of 1755 could not come to an agreement as to the lawfulness of separating from the Church of England; (2) the only point settled was that there was no present expediency for such a separation; (3) the arguments used in favor of separation were arguments which Wesley could not answer to his own satisfaction; (4) finally, rather than give up open air preaching, extemporaneous prayer, forming societies, and permitting men not episcopally ordained to preach, Wesley would wholly separate himself from the Established Church.[20]

In 1758 Wesley issued a pamphlet entitled *Reasons Against Separation From the Church of England.* In this he presented twelve reasons for the Methodists not becoming a separate church or denomination. These are as follows: (1) It would contradict our repeated declarations. (2) It would give occasion of offence to the enemies of God. (3) It would prejudice against us pious folk who now receive benefit from our preaching. (4) It would hinder multitudes who do not love God from hearing us. (5) It would cause hundreds, if not thousands, of our people to separate from us. (6) It would cause much strife, first between those who left the church and those who did not, and second between those who left us and those who did not, whereas we are now in peace. (7) It would cause public and private controversy, and thus take our time from preaching vital religion. (8) We should have to form a plan for a new church, and for that we have neither time nor com-

petence. (9) Even distant thoughts of leaving the church have caused some to conceive and express contempt of the clergy. (10) History shows that reformers — instance Arndt and Robert Bolton — have done much more good when they remained in their churches than when they separated. (11) This is shown in England in our own memory. Those who left the church and formed new bodies have not prospered, and have not been more holy or useful than before. (12) Such separation would contradict the very end for which God has raised us up. That end is to quicken our brethren of the Church of England.[21]

One of Wesley's sermons is entitled "On Schism." It is based upon the text in I Corinthians 12:25: "That there might be no schism in the body." The following quotations from this sermon help us realize the philosophy underlying Wesley's insistence that the Methodists remain in fellowship with the Church of England:

"To separate ourselves from a body of living Christians, with whom we were before united, is a grievous breach of the law of love."

"Separation opens a door to all unkind tempers, both in ourselves and others."

"Do not rashly tear asunder the sacred ties, which unite you to any Christian Society....If you are a living member, if you live the life that is hid with Christ in God, then take care how you rend the body of Christ, by separating from your brethren. It is a thing of evil in itself. It is a sore evil in its consequences. Oh have pity upon yourself! Have pity on your brethren! Have pity even upon the world of the ungodly! Do not lay more stumbling blocks in the way of those for whom Christ died."

In a letter written by Mr. Wesley from Birmingham, March 5, 1783, to Samuel Bradburn, he says: "When the Methodists leave the Church of England, God will leave the Methodists."[23]

Somewhat late in his life Wesley wrote a sermon entitled "On

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[20] Tyerman, L., *The Life and Times of the Rev. John Wesley, M.A.*, Vol. II, pp. 207-209.

[21] Faulkner, John A., *Wesley As Sociologist, Theologian, Churchman*, pp. 114, 115.

[22] Sermon LXXX. *The Works of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M.* American Edition. Emory, John (ed.) *Sermons*, Vol. 2.

[23] The original letter is in the British Museum, London.

Attending the Church Service."[24] It was written to refute those among the Methodists who had alleged the evil living of certain clergymen of the Church of England as an excuse for not attending worship in the Established Church. Throughout this sermon Wesley asserts that the original Methodist rule was a good one, namely, that every member of the Methodist Society should attend the Church and Sacrament unless he had been bred among Christians of another denomination.

At the Conference of 1788 held in London it was stated by Mr. Wesley that in the course of fifty years the Methodists had not willingly varied from the church in doctrine or discipline. However, he did point out that of necessity certain new church features were used by the Societies, viz, preaching in the fields, extemporary prayer, the employment of lay preachers, forming and regulating societies, and the holding of yearly Conferences.[25]

In the April, 1790, issue of the *Arminian Magazine* appear the following words of John Wesley:

> I never had any design of separating from the Church: I have no such design now. I do not believe the Methodists in general design it, when I am no more seen. I do, and will do, all that is in my power to prevent such an event . . . I declare once more, that I live and die a member of the Church of England; and that none, who regard my judgment or advice, will ever separate from it.[26]

One illustration from the life of Charles Wesley is noteworthy at this point. When Charles was on his death-bed he sent for the Parish Vicar and remarked to him: "Sir, whatever the world may have thought of me I have lived and I die in the communion of the Church of England, and I will be buried in the yard of my Parish Church."[27] A short time afterward the body of Charles Wesley was borne to his grave in the churchyard of the Marylebone Parish, London, by eight Anglican priests.

In view of the above discussion about John Wesley's professed loyalty to the Church of England the question naturally arises,

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[24] Sermon CIX. *The Works of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M.* American Edition. Emory, John (ed.) *Sermons,* Vol. 2.

[25] *The Journal of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M.* Standard Edition. Curnock, N. (ed.), Vol. VII, p. 422.

[26] Tyerman, L. *The Life and Times of the Rev. John Wesley, M.A.* Vol. III, pp. 634, 635.

[27] Anderson, W. K. (ed.) *Methodism,* p. 40.

Why, then, did Mr. Wesley in 1784 depart from the ecclesiastical practice of the Established Church in his ordaining Thomas Coke, as superintendent, and Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey, as presbyters, to supervise the Methodist Societies in America?

Spare forbids a detailed discussion of this ecclesiastical innovation on the part of Mr. Wesley. A few summary statements must suffice. When John Wesley realized that the Methodist Societies in America needed ordained ecclesiastical administrative leadership, he tried, first of all, in vain, to get the Church of England to ordain such leaders. Then, when he was forced to take such drastic action in the ordination of the leaders for America, he based his right to do it upon his own ecclesiastical ordination, as a presbyter, in the Church of England. In other words, what he was doing, however contrary to the established practice, he believed he was doing through the authority of the Church of England, and through it all his own words reveal that he considered himself and the Methodist Societies as parts of the Church of England.

Looking back on the scene it is easy to conclude that it was inevitable that ultimately the Methodist Societies would be formed into a separate denomination. And so history has given its verdict that Wesley was wrong in at least one particular—when he said that God would leave the Methodists if the Methodists left the Church of England.

But we are reminded constantly of Methodism's tremendous debt to Anglicanism. Dr. W. W. Sweet summarizes this debt in these weighty words:

1. Methodism owes to Anglicanism a rich churchly heritage and tradition. Methodism's relation to Anglican churchly tradition saved Methodism from becoming merely a sect movement. A sect "harps" on one or two doctrinal strings. A church emphasizes the total catholic doctrinal portion. Methodism was undergirded by the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England.

2. Methodism owes to Anglicanism a heritage of dignified worship and a historic liturgy.

3. Methodism owes to Anglicanism the tradition of a dignified hymnody.

4. The Methodist form of church government is based upon the Low Church Anglican concepts of church polity of Bishops King and Skillingfleet, whose conclusions Wesley accepted and passed on to us. Although there is no form of church government presented in Scripture, Wesley held that the episcopal form was not contrary to Scripture and is the best.

5. Methodism is indebted to Anglicanism in gaining a foothold in America. The work of Devereux Jarratt, evangelical Anglican clergyman in Virginia, illustrates this.

6. Methodism owes to Anglicanism an educational tradition which has made the Methodist Church in America one of the most significant educational influences in the land.[28]

We re-affirm that Methodism is in the Holy Catholic tradition. The Methodist Revival was not a new religion or sect. It was not another Reformation. Rather, it was a revival of the Reformation which in turn had been a rediscovery of the heart of the Gospel as revealed in Jesus Christ and as demonstrated in the Apostolic Church. Methodism represents a purification of historic Christianity. Methodists belong to that Movement which Jesus launched among men in the first century and we must not lose the sense of historic continuity.

One portion of the exhibition of "The Faith of Britain" in St. Paul's Cathedral, London, during the summer of 1951, was entitled "New Life." One-half of the space in the "New Life" display was devoted to John Wesley and the Wesleyan Revival. Accompanying the display were these words: "In the 18th century John Wesley recovered the Evangelical note of the Gospel. He spent his life going up and down the country on horseback rousing the conscience of the nation."

John Wesley and the Whole Gospel

We proceed to a discussion of the second reason for affirming the ecumenical mind of John Wesley: he proclaimed the whole Gospel in all of its applicable aspects. The student of John Wesley is well-acquainted with the tremendous emphasis he placed upon the *personal* aspects of the Christian Faith.

The story of John Wesley's spiritual pilgrimage up to the time of Aldersgate in 1738 is the narrative of a soul struggling for personal spiritual certainty. The rigorous discipline of the Holy Club at Oxford was a search for spiritual assurance. The reason for going to Georgia as a missionary was "to save our souls."[29] The constant daily discipline undertaken by John Wesley on the voyage to America revealed the intensity of his spiritual longing.[30] On the journey he was profoundly impressed by the spiritual confidence of the Moravian Christians in the midst of the storms.[31]

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[27] Anderson, W. K. (ed.), *Methodism,* p. 40.

[28] Anderson, W. K. (ed.), *Methodism,* pp. 49, 50.

[29] *The Journal of John Wesley* (Abridged Edition, Curnock, N., ed.), p. 7.

[30] Ibid., pp. 7, 8.

[31] Ibid., p. 10.

Upon his return to England Wesley wrote: "The faith I want is 'a sure trust and confidence in God, that, through the merits of Christ, my sins are forgiven, and I reconciled to the favour of God.' ....I want that faith which none can have without knowing that he hath it...."[33]

Wesley's spiritual search for personal assurance was satisfied at Aldersgate. All Methodists are familiar with his record of his spiritual experience: "About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation: and an assurance was given me, that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death."[34]

After Aldersgate Wesley went forth to proclaim a spiritual experience in Christ which is witnessed to by the Holy Spirit. He was thrilled as his mother related to him the story of her new-found spiritual assurance.[35] He finds joy in recording in his *Journal* the testimony of one of his converts, John Nelson, who "was as sure his sins were forgiven, as he could be of the shining of the sun."[36]

Methodist soldiers on the battlefields of the continent wrote to Mr. Wesley telling about their spiritual confidence in the midst of danger.[37] Edward Greenfield, a tinner in Cornwall, was accused unjustly because "he says he knows his sins are forgiven."[38] Then there was Sarah Peters, a member of the London Society, who was never known to doubt concerning her own salvation.[39]

But the Christian Gospel in its Wesleyan personalness also included the spiritual transformation of the attitudes and habits of the individual. To Wesley Christian goodness meant Christian conversation, Christian conduct, Christian character. In his search for Christian assurance Wesley said that he wanted a spiritual experience that would be manifest in its fruits—that would free him from

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[33] Ibid., p. 11.
[34] Ibid., p. 37.
[35] Ibid., p. 51.
[36] Ibid., pp. 80, 81.
[37] Ibid., p. 126.
[38] Ibid., pp. 159, 195, 196.
[39] Ibid., pp. 176, 177.
[39] Ibid., p. 231.

sin, fear, doubt and despair.[40] Immediately after his Aldersgate experience Wesley knew he was transformed because he testified publicly and he began to pray for his enemies.[41] As a result of his Aldersgate experience Wesley discovered the power of victory in the midst of temptation.[42]

Innumerable are the converts of the Wesleyan Revival who were transformed by the grace of God. Permit me to mention only a few: The woman who was "converted" even in her tongue;[43] Mary Cheesebrook, a former "mistress," to whom God gave a new heart;[44] Edward Greenfield, the tinner who became "remarkable for a quite contrary behaviour";[45] the referee at cock-fights, who after his conversion gave Mr. Wesley his referee's chair (which Mr. Wesley used as a study chair in London) because he had no further use for it; and Wesley's barber, who was divinely delivered from the drink habit.[46]

As a result of Wesley's emphasis upon the personal aspects of the Christian Gospel he was an extremely careful disciplinarian in relation to the members of the Methodist Societies. How often we read in his *Journal* that he "purged" the Society of all those who did not give living evidence of their Christian profession.[47]

But we must move on to a consideration of the *social* aspects of the Christian Gospel proclaimed by Wesley. Salvation by faith produces the fruit of social righteousness. Salvation makes people concerned about the needs of others. Wesley was continually helping the poor and needy by providing funds, from which they could either borrow or receive benevolences.[48] He provided work for the unemployed.[49] He provided the sick with necessary medicine.[50]

The influence of the Gospel was seen in mighty transformations. Three illustrations of social transformations—in Kingswood;

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[40] Ibid., p. 37.
[41] Ibid., p. 51.
[42] Ibid., p. 51.
[43] Ibid., p. 130.
[44] Ibid., pp. 212, 213.
[45] Ibid., p. 176.
[46] Ibid., p. 254.
[47] Ibid., pp. 107, 120, 121, 133, 141, 150, 159, 168, 201, 230.
[48] Ibid., pp. 104, 108, 109, 160, 163, 164, 192, 213.
[49] Ibid., pp. 104, 122.
[50] Ibid., pp. 197, 205, 213.

St. Just, Cornwall; Epworth—in Wesley's own words, are illuminating:

> . . . a short account of what had been done in Kingswood: The scene is already changed. Kingswood does not now, as a year ago, resound with cursing and blasphemy. It is no more filled with drunkenness and uncleanness, and the idle diversions that naturally lead thereto. It is no longer full of wars and fightings, of clamour and bitterness, of wrath and envyings. Peace and love are there.[51]
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> It is remarkable that those of St. Just (Cornwall) were the chief of the whole for hurling, fighting, drinking, and all manner of wickedness: but many of the lions are become lambs, are continually praising God, and calling their old companions in sin to come and magnify the Lord together.[52]
>
> I see plainly, we have often judged amiss, when we have measured the increase of the work of God in this, and other places, by the increase of the Society only. The Society here (Epworth) is not large; but God has wrought upon the whole place. Sabbath-breaking and drunkenness are no more seen in these streets; cursing and swearing are rarely heard. Wickedness hides its head already.[53]

In view of all this it is easy to understand the answer of a Cornish Methodist, who, when asked, "How do you explain the morality of the people and the strength of their convictions?" answered, "A man named Wesley passed this way."

As a result of the Gospel of Human Rights which Wesley proclaimed he had a tremendous influence in the direction of social reform. Dr. Walter G. Muelder summarizes the social reform tendencies in Wesley's Gospel by noting the following areas in which they were manifest: opposition to the liquor traffic; the attack on slavery; the class-less Gospel; the stewardship of wealth; combatting cliches which rationalized the plight of the poor; faith in the capacities for leadership among the poor; political responsibility of Christians; and prison reform.[54]

The English rector at Gateshead, in 1895, in his book, *The Attitudes of the Church to Some Social Problems,* said: "The man who did most to reform the social life of England in the last century was John Wesley."[55] J. R. Green in his *History of the English People* says, "The Methodists themselves were the least result of

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[51] Ibid., p. 91.

[52] Ibid., p. 165.

[53] Ibid., p. 222.

[54] Anderson, W. K. (ed.), *Methodism,* pp. 194-197.

[55] Moore, John M., *Methodism in Belief and Action,* pp. 210, 211.

the Methodist revival . . . a result of the religious revival was the steady attempt, which has never ceased from that day to this, to remedy the guilt, the ignorance, the physical suffering, the social degradation, of the profligate and the poor."[56]

John Wesley and the World View

John Wesley is the author of the oft-repeated dictum, "The world is my parish." Wesley accepted his Christian responsibility to the world—the world of people, irrespective of class; the world of races, irrespective of geography; the world of human relationships, irrespective of circumstance.

Wesley proclaimed the universality of God's grace as revealed in Jesus Christ. Theologically, he opposed the doctrine of pre-destination. In a sermon entitled "Free Grace,"[57] preached at Bristol, he, first of all, defines the doctrine in these words: "Call it therefore by whatever name you please, election, preterition, predestination, or reprobation, it comes in the end to the same thing. The sense of all is plainly this: by virtue of an eternal, unchangeable, irresistible decree of God, one part of mankind are infallibly saved, and the rest infallibly damned; it being impossible that any of the former should be damned, or that any of the latter should be saved."

He then proceeds to mention seven reasons why he believes that the doctrine of predestination is not the doctrine of God: (1) it makes void the ordinance of God; (2) it tends to destroy holiness; (3) it tends to destroy the comfort of religion; (4) it tends to destroy our zeal for good works; (5) it has a tendency to overthrow the whole Christian revelation; (6) it makes the Christian revelation contradict itself; (7) it is a doctrine full of blasphemy.

In his ministry Wesley had a class-less Gospel. He ministered to people—people in their needs, irrespective of class or circumstance. He was a Christian witness to the country-folk of Epworth, the working folks of London and Bristol, the intellectuals of Oxford, the gentry of the towns, the dirty colliers of Kingswood, the rude folk of Wednesbury, the down-and-out of Newcastle-on-Tyne, the prisoners in Newgate, the insane in Bedlam. Methodism must always be viewed as a people's movement.

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[56] Ibid, p. 211.

[57] Welch, H. (ed.), *Selections from the Writings of the Rev. John Wesley, M.A.*, pp. 30-45.

John Wesley was, also, concerned about the world of races. He preached a sermon entitled "The General Spread of the Gospel."[58] It is based on the text in Isaiah 11:9: "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." This is a missionary sermon in which the religious complexion of the world is described as follows:

> Supposing the world to be divided into thirty parts, nineteen of them are professed heathens, altogether as ignorant of Christ as if he had never come into the world; six of the remaining parts are professed Mohammedans, so that only five in thirty are so much as nominally Christians!

In this sermon is the prophetic insight that just as the Methodist leaven had spread from Oxford into all of England, so from England it will ultimately spread into all the world. However, there is nothing narrow about Wesley's viewpoint. He longs and prays for the day when the Christian faith, in its purity and power, will be dominant in all the world.

The Methodist Revival had a profound influence upon Christian Missions. The date commonly accepted for the inauguration of modern missions is 1792. Dr. James Cannon once declared:

> The new spirit of enthusiasm among the non-conformist Churches of England, and the Established Church as well, which found expression in modern missions is traceable almost directly to the response of those bodies to the influence of the Wesleyans during the preceding half-century. John Wesley was in his grave when William Carey sailed for India, but Wesley made Carey possible.[59]

Referring again to the Faith of Britain exhibition in St. Paul's Cathedral, London, it was pointed out there that it was during the forty years immediately following the Wesleyan Revival that the seven great missionary societies of Great Britain were founded:

Methodist Missionary Society	1786
Baptist Missionary Society	1792
London Missionary Society	1795
Church Missionary Society	1799
British and Foreign Bible Society	1804
Church Mission to the Jews	1809
Church of Scotland Foreign Missions Conference	1824

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[58] Welch, H. (ed.), *Selections from the Writings of the Rev. John Wesley, M.A.*, pp. 157-170.

[59] Anderson, W. K. (ed.), *Methodism*, p. 212.

Methodism has always been characterized by a triumphant missionary aggressiveness. From the day that Richard Boardman and Joseph Pilmore left England as the first Methodist missionaries to America until the present moment, Methodism has followed the vision of the Christ of the Great Commission to whom all continents, tongues, and races belong.

That the Wesleyan Revival has grown into a world movement is shown by the following statistics relative to contemporary Methodist Membership:[80]

America	
U.S.A.	11,073,900
Canada	528,000
Mexico	16,300
Central and South America	188,400
West Indies	66,800
Europe	
British Isles	796,200
Continental Europe	132,200
Africa	536,900
Asia	568,500
Australasia	310,300
Total	14,217,500

John Wesley and Christian Unity

The fourth, and final, line of evidence in affirming the ecumenical mind and spirit of John Wesley is his demonstration of Christian unity. He was ever anxious for warm-hearted Christian fellowship among all true followers of Jesus Christ.

In his description of "The Character of a Methodist" Mr. Wesley makes it plain that the distinguishing marks of a Methodist should be the distinctive characteristics of any Christian:

> The distinguishing marks of a Methodist are not his opinions of any sort . . . Neither are words or phrases of any sort . . . Nor do we desire to be distinguished by actions, customs, or usages of an indifferent nature . . . Nor is he distinguished by laying the whole stress of religion on any single part of it . . . A Methodist is one who has "the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost given unto him"; one who "loves the Lord his God with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his mind, and with all his strength." . . .

[80] *The Methodists of the World*, p. 28.

. . . from real Christians, of whatsoever denomination they be, we earnestly desire not to be distinguished at all . . .[61]

"Catholic Spirit" is the title of one of Wesley's sermons.[62] It is based on the words found in II Kings 10:15: "Is thine heart right, as my heart is with thy heart? If it be, give me thine hand." Commenting on the text Wesley remarks that there is no inquiry concerning opinions or modes of worship. Rather, it is an inquiry concerning the attitude of the heart toward Jesus Christ and one's fellow-men.

And so Wesley describes the man of a catholic spirit thusly:

> But while he is steadily fixed in his religious principles, in what he believes to be the truth as it is in Jesus; while he firmly adheres to that worship of God which he judges to be most acceptable in his sight; and while he is united, by the tenderest and closest ties, to one particular congregation—his heart is enlarged towards all mankind, those he knows, and those he does not; he embraces with strong and cordial affection neighbors and strangers, friends and enemies. This is catholic, or universal, love.
>
> If then we take this word in the strictest sense, a man of a catholic spirit is one who, in the manner above mentioned, gives his hand to all whose hearts are right with his heart.

John Wesley has another sermon entitled "A Caution Against Bigotry."[63] The text is found in Mark 9:38, 39: "And John answered Him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in Thy name; and he followeth not us." Wesley discusses first the identity of this one who "followeth not us." Perhaps he is one who "has no outward connexion with us" in the Gospel ministry, or one who "is not of our party," or one who "differs from us in our religious opinions," or one who differs "in some point of practice," or even one who may belong to a church "as we account to be in many respects anti-Scriptural and anti-Christian."

But Wesley concludes that if this other person really casts out devils in Christ's name, his work is not to be hindered. (He is careful to state that even ordination should not be denied him.) The sermon reaches a climax as he cautions his followers against bigotry, which he defines as "too strong an attachment to, or fondness for, our own party, opinion, church, and religion."

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[61] Welch, H. (ed.), *Selections from the Writings of the Rev. John Wesley, M.A.*, pp. 292-302.

[62] Ibid., pp. 106-121.

[63] *Sermons on Several Occasions by the Rev. John Wesley, A.M.*, First Series, pp. 428-442.

During his entire ministry John Wesley craved fellowship and unity with other Christians. Early in his ministry he was greatly disturbed by his enforced separation from the Fetter Lane Society and he set a day of prayer to try to discover if re-union were possible.[64]

He was careful to note that "the points in question between us and either the German or English Antinomians are not points of opinion, but of practice." He continues, "We break with no man for his opinion. We think, and let think."[65]

Wesley's *Short History of the Methodists* concludes with this comment: "We leave every man to enjoy his own opinion, and to use his own mode of worship, desiring only that the love of God and his neighbor be the ruling principle in his heart, and show itself in his life by an uniform practice of justice, mercy, and truth. And, accordingly, we give the right hand of fellowship to every lover of God and man, whatever his opinion or mode of worship be, of which he is to give an account to God only."[66]

The magnanimity of Wesley's Christian spirit is revealed in a letter to a Roman Catholic, written from Dublin, in 1749. In the opening paragraphs he points out that in the midst of differences of opinion men must beware of wrong tempers toward each other. In the concluding paragraphs he asks for a four-fold mutual covenant: (1) not to hurt one another; (2) to speak nothing harsh or unkind to each other; (3) resolve to harbour no unkind thought, no unfriendly temper, toward each other; (4) to help each other on in whatever we are agreed leads to the Kingdom.

Certainly enough has been said and enough illustrations cited to reveal the concern of John Wesley for a spirit of true Christian unity among all believers. He sought earnestly "to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," remembering "there is one body, and one Spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all."[68]

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[64] *The Journal of John Wesley* (Abridged Edition, Curnock, N., ed.), pp. 97-100, 108.

[65] Ibid., p. 174.

[66] Carter, H., *The Methodist Heritage*, pp. 202, 203.

[67] Welch, H. (ed.), *Selections from the Writings of the Rev. John Wesley, M.A.*, pp. 303-311.

[68] Ephesians 4:3-6.

Thus we bring to a close this section on the ecumenical mind and spirit of John Wesley. Because of his identification with the four universals of ecumenicity—the Church of Christ, the Whole Gospel, the World View, Christian Unity—we agree that he was "the most ecumenically minded of all the great reformers."

METHODISM'S ECUMENICAL PERSPECTIVE IN THE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURIES

The ecumenical perspective of Methodism has remained undimmed since the days of the Wesleys. Wherever Methodism has been found there has been the concern about the Church of Christ, the Whole Gospel, the World View, the spirit of Christian Unity. It is interesting to note the "ecumenical" nature of the sacraments that has developed in Methodism. The Holy Communion is for all who wish to receive it. In Baptism any one of the three modes may be used. The creed of Methodism is the catholic tradition. Methodism emphasizes both approaches to religion: the historical, or traditional, the psychological, or experiential.

Dr. Muelder summarizes the social reforms in 19th century England of which the Methodists were active supporters: freedom of worship for Roman Catholics; the Reform Bill of 1832, relating to the franchise; the projects of the Clapham Sect, who were interested in Christianizing various social relationships; the abolition of slavery; the humanizing of the prison system; the reform of the penal code; new industrial legislation; and the whole area of social service.

Methodism in America has been just as sensitive to the needs of people. Methodism's concern about the relevancy of the Gospel has been seen in its successful adaptation to developing American life. On the American frontier the Methodist Church re-inforced the democratic challenge of the New World. Methodism sponsored religious revivals, educational opportunities and kept alive a keen social consciousness.

At the Methodist General Conference in 1908 the now famous "Social Creed of Methodism" was adopted. This creed, as is generally known, became the basis of that adopted by the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. The people called Methodists have always been in the forefront of the struggle against

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[69] Anderson, W. K. (ed.) *Methodism,* pp. 197-199.

slavery, for temperance, for better race relations, and for peace in the world.

Through the years Methodism has been characterized by its missionary aggressiveness. The normal mood of Methodism has been the missionary mood. The stirring story of Methodist advance across the continent and of the establishment of younger churches around the world is the story of a resistless evangelism. God raised Methodism up to be Christianity in earnest.

Today three-fourths of the Protestant missionary enterprise is carried by the churches in Great Britain and in the United States of America. The Methodist Church carries one-sixteenth of the total load of missionary activity. At the present time the Methodist Church has 1,421 active missionaries serving overseas—245 more than it had in 1946 when the Communists began their tightening of controls in China.

Methodism has, likewise, been active in movements of church unity. Sometimes Methodists have participated in actual church union. Witness the following unions: The Methodist Church of Canada, 1874; The Methodist Church in Australia, 1907; The United Church of Canada, 1925; The Methodist Church of Great Britain, 1932; The Methodist Church, 1939; The Church of Christ in Japan, 1941; The Church of South India, 1947.

Always Methodists have been actively interested in cooperative church movements. Methodists have participated in all of the great ecumenical conferences: those dealing with evangelism and missionary cooperation: Edinburgh, 1910; Jerusalem, 1929; Madras, 1938; Whitby, 1947; those dealing with theology and faith and order: Edinburgh, 1910; Lausanne, 1927; Edinburgh, 1937; those relating to social action and life and work: Edinburgh, 1910; Stockholm, 1925; Oxford, 1937. The Methodists were actively represented at Amsterdam in 1948 and are members of the World Council of Churches.

One other way in which Methodism has tried to foster a greater spirit of Christian unity has been through the development of an ecumenical Methodism. Beginning in 1881 a series of Ecumenical Methodist Conferences have been held, and the eighth such conference was in session in Oxford, England, from August 28 to September 7, 1951.

WHAT HAPPENED AT OXFORD?

At Oxford, Methodists of the world met together. Such an Ecumenical Methodist Conference is a family reunion of all those Protestant denominations which claim John Wesley as spiritual father. There are approximately thirty-five such denominations in the world with an aggregate membership of over fourteen million Methodists. There were five hundred official delegates at Oxford: one hundred from Great Britain and Ireland, two hundred from the United States of America, and two hundred from the rest of the world.

It was unusually appropriate that the Conference was held in Oxford, "the cradle of Methodism." Wesley's father, Samuel Wesley, had been a student in Exeter College. Three of the Wesley brothers, Samuel, John and Charles, attended Christ Church College. For twenty-five years John Wesley was a Fellow of Lincoln College, where was formed the Holy Club. George Whitefield was a student in Pembroke College, and it was in Oxford that he met John Wesley for the first time. Thomas Coke was a student in Jesus College. John Wesley was ordained deacon and priest in the Christ Church Cathedral, and he preached his first sermon at South Leigh, just eight miles from Oxford. Charles Wesley was ordained deacon in Christ Church Cathedral. Both John and Charles preached in the University Church of St. Mary the Virgin. It was in Merton College that the term "Methodist" was originated.

Methodists of the world fellowshipped together at Oxford. It was inevitable that there should be an exhilarating experience of fellowship among representative Methodists from all over the world. The assignment of delegates to various Oxford Colleges for housing and meals contributed greatly to the opportunities for fellowship. Then there were daily occasions of Christian fellowship at the Conference sessions in the Wesley Memorial Methodist Church, at coffee time, at tea-time, and in the discussion groups. Two public receptions for the delegates were held: by the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford University, and by the Mayor and Mayoress of Oxford.

Methodists of the world worshipped together at Oxford. Public "acts of worship" for the beginning of each day's sessions had been prepared in advance, and printed booklets were used by the delegates. Some Methodist would lead in the worship ritual, and then

a Methodist from some other part of the world would bring the devotional message. There were also public worship services in the evening and on Sunday.

At Oxford Methodists of the world thought together. The general purpose of Oxford was three-fold: (1) to re-evaluate the Methodist heritage; (2) to re-examine the Methodist doctrines in the light of contemporary thought; (3) to re-assess the Methodist contribution to the Universal Church. The following listing of the topics, discussed by leaders of Methodist thought, helps to reveal the intense thoughtfulness of the Conference sessions:

Methodist Traditions (in various parts of the world)
Methodism and the Catholic Tradition
Methodism's Message
Methodist Doctrines
Methodism and Protestant Tradition
Methodist Means of Grace
Methodist Fellowship
Methodism and Totalitarianism
Methodism and Other Churches
Methodism and Social Witness
Methodism and Scientific Humanism
Methodism and the Changing Social Order
Methodism and Biblical Criticism
Methodism and Personal Responsibility
Methodism and Recent Theological Tendencies
Methodism and the World Church
Methodism and Evangelism
Methodism and Missions

Likewise, Methodists of the world discussed together at Oxford. The delegates were divided into five adult discussion groups and one youth group. The discussion groups met each morning after the formal lectures. Here is a sample list of the questions prepared for discussion:

Can we hold Wesley's doctrine of justification in its entirety today?

Is perfect love possible while human ignorance remains?

In what sense is Baptism a sacrament?

Are we satisfied with our traditional means of fellowship?

How true is it that Methodism has no distinctive doctrines but

only distinctive emphases?

Is there any case for a national Church?

How can we uphold the Christian standard of marriage in a secular society?

What are the foundation principles which Christian education in any sphere ought to serve?

What are the basic principles of a Christian doctrine of work? How can these be brought to bear on those in industry and the professions?

"There can be neither Jew nor Greek, but all are one in Christ." How does this bear on our modern race problems?

Is the laity given enough, or too much, responsibility in the affairs of the local church?

Are we sufficiently aware of our responsibility in local and national politics?

How can the Christian faith be made to seem relevant to the modern man?

Has the desire to spread our form of civilization any place in the missionary motive?

On the last evening of the Conference a composite summary of the findings of the discussion groups was presented to the entire Conference. Some of the findings are these:

1. The doctrines of justification by faith and sanctification must be restored to places of primacy in the theological thinking and experience of individuals.
2. Both justification and sanctification have social as well as personal implications.
3. Infant baptism is a confused issue.
4. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper must be raised to its high place in Christian worship.
5. Christian individuals must be trained in the use of the means of grace.
6. A sense of spiritual fellowship must be restored to Methodist Churches.
7. Christian ethics must be insisted upon in every relationship of life.
8. There is much confusion as to marriage and divorce.
9. The Church is responsible for Christian education.

10. The Church must not make itself synonymous with any economic system.

11. Racial differences are to be appreciated; racial tensions must be done away with.

12. Methodists must become aware of their responsibility for the political life of the nation.

Finally, the Methodists of the world affirmed together at Oxford. The Conference voted favorably upon the following administrative details. The new name of the Conference is World Methodist Conference. The officers are to be a president, a vice-president, and two secretaries. A secretariat with offices both in New York and London is to be set up. In the future, meetings will be held every five years instead of every ten years. The Conference established seven working committees: youth, education, faith and order, women's work, exchange of ministers, finance, and evangelism. It was voted to recommend to the respective member bodies the establishment of a Methodist House at Oxford University. The Conference approved plans for a world-wide Methodist evangelistic crusade to be held in 1953, to follow a year of preparation in 1952. The Youth Section of the Conference addressed a message to the Methodist Youth of the World. The entire Conference addressed a message to the Methodists of the world.

I wish to summarize the doctrinal affirmations of Oxford in this seven-fold manner:

1. The distinctive emphases of Methodist doctrines are restated: (1) Justification by faith; (2) The witness of the Spirit; (3) Perfect love; (4) Universality of the Gospel.

2. The primary problem of the world is theological. Only the grace of God is adequate to meet contemporary needs. But it must be the grace of God in its total applicability.

3. There must be a renewed emphasis on Biblical theology.

4. The content of theology must be valid in the light of contemporary thought.

5. The statement of theology must be comprehensible to modern man.

6. The doctrines of justification and sanctification must be emphasized in both their personal and social aspects.

7. Evangelism is the crying need of the world. A sound evangelism is doctrinal in its content.

And so the Eighth Ecumenical Methodist Conference is a matter of history. But its spirit and affirmations are contemporary guideposts along Methodism's pathway to increased moral relevance and spiritual effectiveness.

THE CONTEMPORARY CONCERN

The Ecumenical Movement has been characterized as "the great new fact of our era."[70] What shall be Methodism's contemporary response to the Ecumenical Movement? Three main answers have been given to this question. On the one hand, there has been a minority, a limited minority, who have asserted that Methodism should have nothing to do with the Ecumenical Movement, that Methodism should repent of its ecumenical activities in the past. However, this appears to be a wholly unrealistic attitude, and to continue to insist upon non-cooperation with other Christians invalidates one's right to serve the present age.

A second response to the question of Methodism's relationship to the Ecumenical Movement is given by those who call for a merging of the Methodist Church with other Protestant denominations. This is the desire for actual church union. This attitude was expressed by a delegate from the United Church of Canada to the Ecumenical Conference at Oxford:

> We shall do nothing to hinder Ecumenical Methodism and shall probably contribute to its needs. But if the choice had to be between the World Church and Ecumenical Methodism, it would be the former. And we should be none the less Methodist in so choosing. Meanwhile, Ecumenical Methodism needs the United Church of Canada and the Church of South India, so that Ecumenical Methodism, however fine, shall not be its final goal.[71]

A third attitude concerning Methodism's response to the Ecumenical Movement, and this seems the most practical of all, is the creation of a strong Methodism sharing its distinctive heritage with other Christians joined in the Ecumenical Movement. Recent Christian history reveals both an intra- and an inter-Confessional movement toward ecumenical unity.

In one of his books Dr. William E. Sangster, immediate past president of the Methodist Church of Great Britain, pleads for a strong Methodism rather than merged Methodism:

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[70] Carter, Henry, *The Methodist Heritage,* p. 1.

[71] Arthur Organ, writing in the *United Church Observer,* October 1, 1951.

Methodism has a distinctive contribution to the Holy Catholic Church . . . The urgent need of all Methodists who desire the reunion of Christendom is not first to copy the customs of others, but to preserve and enhance their own rich heritage. This is not to build barriers against sister communions: this is, rather, to enrich the Church that is yet to be by safeguarding the "grand depositum" which God has lodged with us . . . We do not believe that God said His last word by John Wesley . . . But we remember that God said a true word by John Wesley, a word the world manifestly needs, and to the witness of which we have been called.[72]

A strong Methodism, because of its distinctive characteristics, is peculiarly fitted to lead in the Ecumenical Movement. Methodism unites with the older Churches of the Continent in the recognition of the significance of the Church as the Creation of God in Jesus Christ and in appreciation of the significance of Christian worship.

Methodism unites with those of the evangelical tradition in emphasizing preaching and evangelism. Methodism unites with those of the primitive type in placing high value upon fellowship and practical helpfulness. Methodism unites with those of the prophetic type in proclaiming the Lordship of Christ over all of life and in the necessity of bringing institutions into conformity to God's will.

Ecumenical Christianity needs the distinctive emphases of Methodism. What are these emphases? Basil Mathews lists the following ten vital characteristics, combined in a particular way, that set Methodism apart as unique: (1) its whole life is rooted and grounded in personal experience; (2) experience has as its first fruit a change of heart which is called conversion; (3) experience and change of heart can be shared by every man and woman, boy and girl, on the planet; (4) a passionate belief in the priceless value of the individual immortal soul; (5) the unresting search for the soul in need; (6) the social passion for the poor and needy; (7) world outlook; (8) enthusiasm; (9) its blend of organization with inspiration; (10) group fellowship.[73]

Two closing words are in order. First, American Methodism enjoys a strategic opportunity in the march of Methodism, and in enabling Methodism to make its full contribution to the Ecumenical Movement. Numerically, seventy-eight per cent of the Methodists of the world are in the United States of America. And certainly

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[72] Sangster, W. E., *Methodism Can Be Born Again,* pp. 39, 40.

[73] Basil Mathews in the *Christian Advocate,* September 3, 1936.

in material resources American Methodists are far ahead of all other geographical areas.

Finally, the challenge to contemporary Methodism is that of experiencing spiritual renewal. Spiritual renewal is not a transient emotionalism, but the Divine redirection of life in all its relationships. It is the renewal of one's own self. It is renewal of fellowship within the worshipping community of which one is a member. It is renewal of testimony to the universality of the redeeming grace of God in Christ. It is renewal of life as servants of mankind.

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The Content of Christian Ethics

Nels F. S. Ferré

Ethics is falsely abstractive as a subject apart from the understanding of the nature of man. In this study we are to consider the nature of Christian motivation. Authority and motivation I consider to be the two main problems of our present society, and not least of all of us as educators. The Conference on Science, Philosophy and Religion, for instance, realizing this fact, is devoting a very critical year to the relation between authority and freedom. Great educational foundations, like the Ford foundation, are intensely concerned with the social sciences, and particularly with the problem of motivation in order that we might get men to do the truth which they already know at least ideally or theoretically. By choosing this topic we are assuredly at the heart of modern man's predicament. How, then, does the teaching of ethics on the level of higher education contribute essentially to the solution of the problem of motivation as well as the problem of authority?

In order to discuss this question at all adequately we must consider the nature of man. Even though man, moreover, cannot be considered piecemeal, but can be understood only as a whole, we must nevertheless consider the various aspects of man which function as distinctive drives within that whole. For the sake of proper diagnosis, then, we want to discuss the nature of man, granting that he is a whole, and using this perspective as our total reference, even while we analyze three sub-headings: the ethics of the mind, or ethics as truth; the ethics of the heart, or Christ and conscience; the ethics of the will, or action as community.

I.

There is real danger to isolate deed from thought, ethics from truth. There is also real danger to equate them. The Word, the *Logos,* the Concept, or the Purpose becomes flesh and lives among us, full of grace and truth. The *Logos* does not thereby cease to be the *Logos.* The *Logos* can never be known in history apart from the *Kairos,* the concrete enactment of the *Logos* in historic decision,

but the *Kairos* never becomes, or can take the place of, the eternal *Logos*. Truth is more a matter of being than of thinking, but being is ever judged by the eternal standard of the thought which is structured in God. The existential and the rational are involved organically one in the other both in God and in man; and yet they cannot be equated outright without a forfeiting of the richness of reality.

At this very point we come to grips with the problem of man and motivation in the most basic relation between existential and rational ethics. Existential ethics emphasizes the decisiveness of man's position before God. The whole man must choose directly with regard to the absoluteness of God's will. There must be no interference of knowledge. In this sense Kierkegaard's insistence on the transcendence and even suspension of teleological ethics is important. Man, according to this view, is not judged by the accumulation of man's standards, but by the eternal will of God which transcends human knowing. Knowledge is of the past, secondary. Obedience is of the present, primary. Religion can be subject to no rational or historic structures. No norms of eternity are given to man. History is unrepeatable. Each situation is unique. Man confronts the direct commands of God to which he must say yes or no. He can never translate his choices into past wisdom.

Precedents cannot ever take the place of the command to go wherever God, who is high and lifted up, sends us, for He calls us forth into an ever unknown land of obedience. From history we learn nothing. Christ is our contemporary. Ours is to be disciples at first hand. Ours it is to live by faith, and not by sight. Such is the position of consistent neo-orthodoxy. God's revelation is in terms of events in history, in decisions through which His will becomes known, or in terms of encounter divine and human, and not in terms of philosophical or ethical abstractions. Christian ethics, this school of thought avers, dealing with the whole man before God in the present moment of decision, is a matter of existential, not of rational ethics. Christian ethics is subjective and individual and not objective and social.

The rationalist replies that such a conception of ethics removes the sovereignty of God as truth. The Holy Spirit, for the rationalist, is defined as the Spirit of truth. Truth is a matter of reality, and of norms inherent in that reality which we can know and obey. Apart from such knowledge ethics becomes capricious and haphaz-

ard. Existential ethics avoids social judgment because it is individualistic. It avoids rational judgment because it is arbitrarily subjective. To the rationalist ethics must be a matter of coherent living and coherent concern. The individual must himself be self-consistent, but he must also be consistent with the need of others. The individual and society alike must be subject to the standard truths of reality in terms of which all are judged.

Ethics, indeed, is truth, but truth is not only a matter of selecting but of seeing, not only a matter of obedience of choice but of the obedience of the mind. Unless it is possible for us to learn from history and from systematic thought, we cannot find out for ourselves what the truth is or what true conduct is. We are then indeed doomed to authoritarianism; our ethics has become heteronomous. History is the accumulation of man's experience before God through which we learn; and systematic thought is the means by which we organize and make available for ourselves the heritage of the ages. But in all instances the truth must be capable of being seen. We have revelation, not mystery, as the essence of the faith. Even in conduct we must worship the Lord our God with all our minds. Decision there must be, but decision is not apart from knowledge, and not apart from social norms, but is rather in accordance with our best knowledge and social standards. So claim the rationalists in ethics.

What is the truth with respect to the relation between the existential and the rational teaching of ethics? The nature of that truth in a large measure determines the kind of motivation which is consistent with an ethics based on reality. The true relation can be understood only if we consider again the relation of *kairos* to *logos* and of decision to thought. The first relation deals with the superstructure within which and in relation to which man finally decides; the second relation deals with the nature of man with respect to the operation of truth as standard and as whole-response.

No totally pure meaning is possible to history. Pure meaning is the prerogative of God alone. History is touched everywhere with finitude and in great measure with sin. Historic existence is *kairic*. The *Logos* is always seen only within the imperfections of history. Even the Word comes incognito within the weaknesses of the flesh. Therefore rational principles or moral norms in the form of universally valid thought or action are impossible. Every

rational or moral norm is abstracted from imperfect history by imperfect people. To be usable in the concrete world it must also be re-applied to an imperfect situation.

Both imperfection and sin characterize history as a whole. Rationalism tends to absolutize an abstraction. This abstraction becomes in effect its god to be worshipped as the ultimate fount of being and of right. Truth for thought and conduct is never like gold in a mine that can be pulled out and refined. Truth is rather like the tough fabric for thought and action that underlies and interweaves with all reality. The deeper and fuller the truth the more concrete and correlative it becomes. The depths of background both enrich the pattern and thwart its intellectualistic oversimplification. Truth can be simple as generality of pattern for thought or conduct, but truth for life is always profoundly complex. The deeper the full involvement of any moral action the less clear and unambiguous it becomes.

Why is this? The reason for this fact is that history is ambiguous precisely in order to produce and insure our ethical reality and freedom. If the *Logos* were unambiguous man would, indeed, always choose the best. At this point Socrates is surely right. If there were no problem outside of man and no darkness within, man would simply do the will of God. But he would do so as a puppet. Unless man eats of the tree of good and evil, he can never see God, or be like God, for the good is good only to a moral creature. No morality is possible, however, without freedom. Nor is freedom possible without ambiguity in terms of which man learns to know the difference between right and wrong by means of the observation in his own actual experience of the difference between good and bad consequences. God made this kind of a world where the *Logos* as the direct light is inaccessible to man exactly in order that man through his own *kairos,* or actual decisions within his own *chronos,* might find out for himself that God's way is best. Lacking full sight, man must live by faith. There is no application of the conclusive *Kairos,* the *Logos* become flesh, except through acts of faith. Such acts alone accumulate the background of ethical insight through which man can freely choose the way of God as his own.

Yet for such historic accumulation of ethical choices from which to learn there must also be cumulative meaning. Even though the *Logos* cannot become pure principle in history, nevertheless, history cannot be lighted apart from Him. Only within the living

Word which is the love of God made flesh can meaning find the unity which fully extends throughout the whole universe. In Him is the maximum explanatory adequacy. In Him all things cohere, and only in Him. The structure for right action is, in the final analysis, not a network of consistent thoughts, but is rather a consistent pattern of love. We cannot imitate a person as such without forfeiting our maturity. Nor can we embody abstract principles which are too brittle and too inflexible to fit the myriad complexity of ever shifting life. But we can imitate a pattern of conduct, and walk in love as beloved children even as Christ loved us and gave himself for us.

Without a final *Logos* which can be increasingly approximated without ever being attained, we cannot know the dependability of the love of God both as stability and as creativity. The flexible fullness of God's love is *definite* without being *specific,* even as a child should be able to trust its own mother completely without knowing what that love is going to reveal over the years ahead, far beyond the child's present imagination or intellectual relevance.

Existential ethics removes the stability of propositional truth: the perspective and proportion of the *Logos* at any one time and by any person or group; rational ethics removes the dynamic, creative, transcendent nature of the *Logos* whereby it can never be reduced to mere principles apart from concrete historic decisions. Truth is, thus, from life and for life, but, even so, from beyond our own kind of life, judging, guiding and saving it. Existential ethics removes the height and the hope of the ideal; rational ethics compresses life into premade molds which cannot contain it. The Christian ethics combines the two into ethics as truth and truth as ethics. The Word becomes living, but yet life itself cannot be attained apart from the Word. The absolute meaning is entertained by the event and helps to create it, but whenever the meaning becomes deed the content of meaning becomes expressed within the finite, and usually within the sin-touched, form of human history.

As far as human nature goes, ethics must be a matter of truth because moral truth can be entertained only by those who dare have it. Moral truth is more a matter of daring life, of concerned acceptance, than it is a matter of intellectual finding or formulation. Our theoretical reason, like great notions, goes way back to history and continues as a network into the present. Regardless of any

individual man's acceptance of it, that history persists through books and other objective records. Thus theoretical thoughts and norms survive. As far as life goes, however, we live largely by our practical reason which is the enlightenment of our purposes. The whole of life puts pressure on the self to have the reasoning of that self confirm its choices. The whole-self pressures thinking in order to force it into confirming its deepest commitments. Such pressure on thinking may also be powerfully enforced by public opinion.

The theoretical or objective reason may convict us of falsehood or guilt, but only provided that we are ready and willing to let it. The practical reason as the agent of the total self is always in the saddle. The theoretical reason as the agent of God and men, our trans-perspectival reason so to speak, is necessary both for our growth and our more radical change, like conversion, but the practical reason, the whole man thinking, is ever dominant. This fact makes it obvious why we can say that while the sinner rationalizes the saint alone reasons. It is by reason of the dominance of the whole-self that truth cannot be had apart from ethical commitment and insight. Not only therefore is truth ethical, but ethics is truth in this partial, but, nevertheless, exceedingly important sense. Certainly this incontrovertible fact deals a mortal blow to the cult of objectivity which presupposes that truth can be had in the moral, spiritual and social realms in terms of objective description apart from the preconditions of subjective commitment to the content of truth as social concern. To be uncommitted to truth as common concern is to be committed to the falsehood of a truth which does not demand such commitment.

II

Our first point declared that ethics is the precondition for the knowing of truth, whereas that ethics itself can neither be understood nor attained apart from total truth. The mind is more than the capacity for the awareness of facts and for logical inference. The mind is the instrument of interpretation of the total self and is consequently governed by the nature and deepest decisions of that self. What truth we can find depends greatly upon the truth that we dare. In the same way, "the heart" is more than the affective states of the self. The affective states are intertwined with the ideas and the

ideals which motivate the self and are themselves also fed by the actions of the self as will. The self as a whole chooses, as we shall see, but in the light of ideas which move him and in terms of feelings which give positive or negative meanings to those ideas. The self interacts with the universe, interpreting the interactions through his mind, relating himself to the universe in terms of pleasant or unpleasant feelings, which are then stored in memories associated with the ideas which refer to his actual experiences of a real world.

The ideas associated with real event-references have not only feeling associations; they also become linked up with feelings as to the rightness or wrongness of any given course of action. One aspect of man's image of God in him is this capacity to experience acts as right or wrong, through a cumulative, complex feeling reaction which is called the conscience. Such feeling responses including conscience are organic to man and therefore inhere in his total self-environment relation. They can be acquired, and are generally so acquired, only because they are constituent to his nature as a human being. Beginnings of such right-or-wrong reactions are to be found in animals, but these have no free ideas sufficiently developed to enable them to have the delayed responses of freedom which alone makes actions moral. As a moral being on this level, man is, indeed, a unique creature. Much dispute has raged around the nature of conscience. Some hold this to be the voice of God to be heeded at all times. Others believe it to be a natural accumulation of social and individual experience, invariably relative in nature. Our decision as to the interpretation of conscience conditions our view on adequate motivation.

The Christian view of ethics depends upon our understanding of the nature of man. The nature of man is largely determined by our understanding of the ethics of "the heart," or the relation of Christ to conscience. A good deal of our grasp of motivation as well as authority is consequently dependent upon the relation of conscience to Christ. Let us therefore go on to outline the nature of conscience before the advent of law, under the law, and as made free within the Gospel of Christ.

Man's conscience before the advent of, or apart from, the Hebrew Christian law has both form and content. The form of conscience is the dynamic sense of right which characterizes human nature everywhere and is, as such, the same before and after the coming of the law and the prophets. The content varies a good deal

but is always a matter of right relations between self, society and nature. Social reference seems to be in terms of self-fulfilment, of obligation to others and in terms of an urge to altruism or to self-giving.

Naturally such content is mostly situational. Man cannot escape the basic aspects of his actual situation: self, others, and nature; but if organic need means constituent relation, even the most primitive religions have ethical content which is the same in structure as the later and more developed conscience. The self as such is torn between concern for self; duty to others and desire for them; the desire to give of self; and a longing to be on right terms, even on friendly terms, with the environment, in whatever terms this is then interpreted. Conscience is not apart from social context and from natural situations. As a drive to be right and to be accepted on friendly terms conscience transcends the self, society and nature as a universal unfulfilled occurrence, pointing thus beyond its own nature as content to the universal content which alone can satisfy it.

Conscience under the law is man's attempt to fulfil, by his own efforts, the laws of right relations, as he understands them, and thus to avoid guilt by the effecting of friendly as well as of right relations. Part of this striving is due to man's desire to be his best self and in as right relations as possible to the world outside himself. As such the striving is noble. Much in primitive religions and in religions of law is to be profoundly admired. We do no service either to God or to man by painting natural man, or man under the law, as black as possible. God has made us for himself and the deepest desire of our lives reflects that fact. But much religion under law, on the other hand, is the attempt to be self-sufficient at the point of pride. Such pride may arise either from insecurity and dread or from aggressive drives. Both result from a lack of self-acceptance. The self dares not accept himself under the high Hebrew Christian law of full love to God and to neighbor precisely because he knows that he can never fulfil this and thus he tries to escape becoming inevitably guilty.

In order to prevent a sense of guilt the self may rather accept certain parts of the law, or certain symbols of it, as the ones to keep, and by the keeping of them may feel consciously safe or even proud, whereas deep down underneath it all he may feel guilty and uncertain to a far larger degree than we suppose. Moralism is

either earnest or complacent, but both forms of the problem indicate a deep, inner insecurity. Both a convicting conscience and a dull conscience are signs of guilt and unhappiness. Men have to live and they therefore adjust themselves practically to the demands of those laws which they accept as actually for them, but, all the same, there is no real release from the pressures of moral obligation in the face of an unfulfilled law or from the guilt which comes from man's total impotence before the judgment throne of a law which is too hard to keep. Conscience under the law is a director of right relations. It is, however, the judgment of the internalized law which insists subconsciously on a guilt which is inescapable.

Therefore conscience needs to be freed by Christ. Christ is the truth of the law fulfilled by love, not through man's power but through God's grace. Man finds freedom through a new relationship where God freely bestows a righteousness not of man's making. This freedom is what Tillich calls "the transmoral conscience," the transcendence of the moral ambiguities of actual actions by a new righteousness and within a new experience of justification by the grace of God. Such freedom centers in the experience of forgiveness based on God's grace in Christ, not on man's merit. Faith removes guilt; the removal of guilt removes frustration; and the removal of frustration cuts the ground under anxiety. The forgiveness of sin by the grace of God through faith in Christ may seem old-time terminology, but the experience as well as the interpretation is more genuine than any less realistic substitute for it.

The conscience that is freed by Christ has power, for it has received a new discourse of meaning and motivation. Faith engenders feelings of satisfaction on a new level of reality. Christ achieves for divided and confused man a new kind of integration. Faith as the existential affirmation of the love of God casts out fear. Faith fosters genuineness. Therefore the martyrs dared to face death with joy and expectation. Faith is the secret of motivation—faith in Christ as the enacted love of God in history—for faith takes possession of the whole self. Man's faith is his deepest self. Thus faith clarifies the mind and constrains the mind with divine power.

Ethics thus becomes settled in truth. Conduct becomes truth in action by the whole self. When the whole self is rooted and

grounded in love, he becomes strengthened with might by the Spirit in the inner man. The conscience which is freed by Christ finds release from conflict, thus releasing also the satisfactions of creative commitment and achievement. Emotions may be interpreted by some as due to frustration, but there are genuine states of well being affectively experienced, as well, which fulfil the inner needs of the creature both with regard to himself and with regard to fullness of satisfactory relationships with his environment. Even when the secondary social environment ignores or is hostile to the new man in Christ he can glory in all his afflictions, because his permanent basis of satisfaction is his relation to the will of God. Even when our minds are mixed up about specific moral issues or when no good choice seems open to us, those who have learned to trust in Christ and who act in faith in God's grace know that Christ is greater than our conscience.

The conscience as such can never be the standard for Christian conduct, for conscience is only the empirical content of the image of God. The image has within it an absolute quality, since it truly reflects man's coming from God and his need for Him. But the image itself has no content. It is a reflection and not a reality. The content is filled in by experience; by parental influence and teaching, by what we learn in school and with friends, and by what we ourselves experience through the medium of previous experience. Human experience, being partly free and ambiguous, has a varied interpretation both as to truth and as to right. The content is therefore by itself relative, but in relation to an absolute urge in the form and to whatever absolute content underlies, or is mixed in, with the relation. We know always with relation to the absolute, directly or indirectly, and therefore this has never left itself without witness.

But Christ as Agape demanding an inclusive and concerned community under God, is the only standard for the Christian conscience. All matters of faith and all doctrines of life and work which are contrary to, or less than, this fully inclusive community of the common concern under God as the only claimant for our full allegiance are therefore to be judged wrong by Christ as the divine content of conscience. Particularly He reveals as evil our narrow allegiances which are camouflaged as loyalties to concrete causes, but which actually contain destructive overagainstness within that loyalty. If Methodism or Calvinism, or any other ism, however

lofty, is our most concretely compelling loyalty, our conscience fails of Christian criterion as constraining motivation. Only the heart made truly whole by Christ's love can give man a mind which is not flesh, experiencing fear and death, but which is life, experiencing life and peace.

III

Thus the mind can become free to think on account of our doing of the truth. He that wills to do the will of God alone can know the doctrine. Only the heart that knows the concern of Christ can find the peace that passes understanding. Christian ethics is thus the clue to peace of mind and peace of heart. But the primary part of man is his will, for this is the self in action. The self is larger than the will, for the self can have a "weak" will, as for instance, when the self chooses in line with outside temptations. When such a choice is made, however, the mind and the feelings are in large measure conflicting aspects. The self, contrariwise, can also have a "strong" will, where it chooses contrary to the objective good it sees, out of self-will, the mind and the feelings again registering protest. But after all the will is the self actively choosing, whether to do or not to do, or what side to take or reject.

Under this last topic of the ethics of the will, or action as community, we can touch on two topics only: the *imago dei* and conversion; and the *imago dei* and sanctification. At these two points we come to grips with the different approaches of liberalism and Christianity, and neo-orthodoxy and Christianity. My strong feeling is that both liberalism and neo-orthodoxy have missed the power of Christian ethics as man's most important motivation, the former through a lack of understanding of the necessity of the new birth; the second through a lack of understanding of the necessity of sanctification.

If the problems of ethics are basically the problems of authority and motivation, I believe that we have made a basic mistake in not accepting the teaching of Jesus that we must be born again. Man is born with the image of God, but not with God in him. Man is created with the reflection of God as the basis of his nature, but not with the reality of God as constituting his nature. In order for man to become whole and to become a spontaneously moral individual, he must have the reflection exchanged or fulfilled by the reality. The tree must become good for him to bear the fruits

of the spirit. In order for motivation to become Christian concern, man must be born again.

For the sake of understanding this fact we should know that the reality of God is love or *Agape* while the image of God is altruism. Man's altruism reflects but does not contain the reality of God's Agape. The essential nature of man is his creation by God and his relations to him. Man's essential nature is, therefore, his divine potential. Man's actual nature, on the other hand, is dominantly sinful or set on self. Such sinfulness is not total in the perspective of the natural man. Natural man can know and do much good, even altruistically, *i. e.,* through outgoing concern and self-renunciation. By nature man knows the good to a large extent, even his conscience bearing witness to this fact. Not to admit this truth is to be parochially defensive. Christian faith can be nothing less than equal to all truth if its God is the sovereign love with relation to whom all must be explained, judged and saved. Such sinfulness, or being set on self, is total, however, in the sense that in his own power man can never find the power of salvation. It is total in the locus of justification. No man can ever keep the whole law and, therefore, under the law, man as man is irreparably guilty. This is a fact, and total depravity, in this sense, is true. Did God, then, put us under an impossible law in order for Him to show off His own power and glory, to make Him feel superior and generous by saving us through grace? God forbid! Again we say, God forbid!

God put us under the law in order for us to see the impossibility and unsatisfactory nature of our attempts at self-centeredness and self-sufficiency. In order to make us free, God first made us stubbornly self-centered. Thus we cannot become puppets or qualifications of the absolute. But, in order to keep us ever dissatisfied with our self-centeredness, God gave us a drive of duty towards others along with a drive of desire for others. Self-centeredness is therefore misery and leaves us frustrated and restless. Sin never satisfies the true self. The law convicts us, both by duty and by desire, that self-centeredness is wrong as well as unsatisfactory. Above all, God put eternity into our hearts. He made us for Himself. His image is our deepest essential motivation, though, for the sake of our individuation and growth in freedom, our actual motivation is towards self and towards relevantly limited group loyalties.

Altruism craves Agape in which Eros is fulfilled and Philia is sanctified. Only by the acceptance of Agape, of God Himself and of His will for the common good, can we find satisfaction for the total self. Such regeneration means a redirection whereby God becomes primary in our lives and whereby the total fellowship actually motivates us as naturally as our drive to self, apart from or over against others, did before. The self which craves to be served and glorified by others must give way to a self constrained by the love of God to serve others and seek their glory. The self as such can never find power over self. He can become increasingly socialized. But to become a heavenly citizen he must be naturalized there. His whole life must be changed. He must be born again. Altruism cannot attain to Agape, but altruism can reject as adequate any other solution for the problem of self than the finding of the new meaning and motivation which inhere in the concern of Christ. Conversion, however affected, is thus realism. God must turn us, as the Psalmist said, if we are to be turned. Regeneration is a prerequisite for a Christian ethics. Without this act of grace there can be no distinctly Christian ethics to experience or to teach.

For a man to find the new will which produces by its very nature the fruits of the Spirit he must thus be born again. By grace are we saved and that not of ourselves; this state is the gift of God's love in Christ Jesus through the indwelling of the Spirit. In what sense, however, does altruism adequately represent the image of God? Does altruism constitute the full nature of man as God's creature? Can ethics do away entirely with self-love on the ground that God is Agape and altruism is the image of God in man? The *imago dei* reflects God's nature as a creative being in terms of man's capacity for continual self-transcendence. It also reflects God's nature as righteousness in terms of man's inalienable sense of right, his "categorical imperative." It also reflects God's eternity of being in terms of man's ability to absolutize. The *imago dei* also reflects God's nature as truth in man's capacity to think, *i. e.*, to operate with abstract ideas and to make logical inferences. But all of these aspects of the *imago dei* are summarized in God's nature as trinity, where God within His very nature is the prototype of all community, and in God's outgoing creative love whereby His eternal purpose is to create a new people for Himself. Agape as trinity and as outgoing love are intrinsi-

cally contained within God's reality as Agape, as eternal, righteous, veridical and *creative, communicative being.*

All operations of God are aspects of His nature as Agape and cannot be understood correctly except in terms of this truth. Possibly we might also include within the *imago dei* man's glory over creation, even as God's glory is above and beyond all else. Some Old Testament scholars like Mowinckel use the Eighth Psalm as the basis for such an interpretation. We do this gladly provided that the power and glory of God and of man are the expressions of their creative love and are not interpreted in invidious terms.

The reason that man can never be happy apart from full society, apart from the community of Christ or the Church, is that the image of God in man demands that the individual find a new level of community where he is not cancelled out but fulfilled. Selflessness and selfishness must both be corrected into self-fulness in fellowship. The natural man never having experienced such communion in Christ cannot even understand, of course, such motivation and fulfilment. It is existentially foolishness or offense to him, but to those who believe, it is the power of God unto salvation. Self-love in the old terms has thus no meaning, for a new self is found through the losing of self, but the self, as we have said, becomes neither *selfish nor selfless but selfful.*

Christian ethics can find its fulfilment only through man's being born again within the new community of the Church of Christ, through man's becoming actually a new creature in Christ. The very direction and content of the will must be changed. The reason that the Christian faith is often not real in educational institutions is all too frequently due to a lack of real Christian understanding, teaching and experience. Man is a sinner who must be saved by grace, but this necessity is itself the very essence of the grace of God in creation. The need for salvation as a free gift and for motivation through maturation within the love of God is God's pedagogical grace. To say this is not to make light of sin, it is to accept its reality in the light of God's sovereign purpose and grace; it is to see reality in the perspective of God's eternal will and not in terms of man's actual state whether as a static or as a striving human being.

I am afraid that little space is left for the relation of the *imago dei* and sanctification. Our liberal friends have often acted as

though unaided nurture could change nature. They have not understood or stressed the difference between man's actual and essential nature, and the pedagogical reason for the interactions between the two. They have not been happy about the fact that man as a sinner must be born again. They have felt that such an anthropology reflects unworthily on God. To be sure they have done much good work in stressing that man's essential nature is from God. They have also been strong in their emphasis on education for life. *Ethics needs education both before and after conversion.* Evangelism is thin and fugitive without adequate education. To neglect the need for regeneration, however, is to neglect precisely the way itself by means of which the reality of the Agape of God fills the reflection of altruism in the *imago dei.*

Much neo-orthodox as well as much older theology has neglected the necessary understanding and acceptance of sanctification. Sanctification is the process whereby the reality of Agape reshapes man's nature, maturing his mind, reconstituting man's feelings, and empowering his will with Christian concern. Sanctification is growth in grace. Man becomes a new creature not only as a justified sinner but as a moral agent. To whittle down the doctrine of sanctification is to cut the nerve of Christian ethics. The *act* of conversion, on whatever manner, gives man a new direction of attention and affection. The *process* of conversion strengthens the direction and intensifies the affections, as well as clarifying the direction and purifying the affections.

Man's will is also increasingly vitalized and habituated with Christian concern. Sanctification is the completion of man's naturalization as a citizen of heaven. I believe that this process may contain critical turnings or infillings, but I believe that it must always start with conversion and always continue until man is translated into the heavenly Kingdom of God's love. The *imago dei* remains the restless seeker even after conversion as an act, and requires that it be fulfilled within the process of the community reality which is God's eternal purpose for the world.

Sanctification means the increasing fulfilment of man's need for God and men within the Agape relationship. The community in Christ, *as a reality,* comes first. Man longs by his deepest nature for this community and finds his deepest satisfactions within it. Sanctification is, therefore, first of all Christ's work in us. It is

due to the power of the Holy Spirit in purifying and guidance. *The primary aspect of sanctification is Godward.* Sanctification is secondarily defined in terms of whatever effects and fosters Christian community. *Mores* are of secondary importance. Whether to eat or not to eat, to drink or not to drink are not matters of primary significance, as the New Testament strongly stresses, but rather whether the whole self under God seeks with mind, heart, and will for God's will to be done for Christian fellowship. To the pure all things as externals are pure. They are to be judged entirely by man's attitude towards them and the consequences of his use of them. The term sanctification has unfortunately come to mean a pious moralism of manners rather than the remaking and the redirection of the whole life by the love of God which overcomes the brittleness and critical attitudes of moralism. Those who make external manners important as such are by that token strangers to Christian sanctification. He alone is sanctified who longs and accepts with his whole life the love of God and within its power seeks to win others for that community which is in Christ.

But sanctification results in the fruits of the Spirit where a new kind of community is actually affected. By their fruits ye shall know them. Carelessness is itself lack of care and very likely of love. There is an inner discipline in sanctification which seems stern to the outsider but is rather the spontaneous demands of the pure love of God within. The Gospel is at the same time no moralism hard to bear, but, rather, a freedom within which Christ has set us free and also cleanses us of impurities. Unless Christians differ in thought, heart and will from the world, Christianity is a fake. The Gospel is a power unto salvation as newness of life. An outpouring of the Spirit will surely affect a new puritanism of life, where the religious essentials take primary place, not as a matter of solemn and unpleasant duty, but as the joyful living within the community of Christian concern. When the Gospel fills us with all joy and peace in believing, the substitute pleasures of worldly life lose their attraction and the world's source of pleasure dries up. Calvinism and pietism, two great Christian forces, were both puritanical. I think there is a fuller puritanism awaiting the world where the ways of the world are left for the walking in the ways of the Lord with more joy and creative daring than the world ever dreamed was possible.

John Wesley's Personal Experience of Christian Perfection

Roy S. Nicholson

So intimately and correctly is John Wesley's name associated with the doctrine of Christian Perfection that it comes as a surprise to some to read the increasingly frequent assertions that Wesley never professed to have personally experienced what he taught as possible and necessary for others. The result of such assertions is that many feel that Wesley was inconsistent and that this may have been more of a theological abstraction or theory than a question of practical value.

One would be less surprised if these assertions were limited to writers outside the pale of Methodism. But when one finds the denial that Wesley ever professed this as a personal experience being circulated by some who fill the highest offices in Methodism it cannot be brushed aside as of no consequence. This matter deserves an accurate and exhaustive study of the words of those who make the denial and of Wesley himself. If it be true that Wesley did not profess the experience, or, what is of more value, that he did not possess it, those who assert that he did should know the truth and desist from circulating erroneous claims for Wesley. If on the other hand it can be shown that he did possess and profess the experience, those who deny that he did should know the truth and desist from circulating further denials.

Unfortunately, the question as to Wesley's personal experience of Christian Perfection is not answered by a simple "Yes" or "No." To ascertain the facts it is necessary to make careful research and to document the material. It is not enough to say: "Wesley said . . ." Neither are fragmentary quotations desirable, although an article of this nature allows only brief quotations from original sources. These will be cited in order that those who wish to refer to them may do so. Wesley complained to Bishop Lavington that he (the bishop) had cited and murdered four or five lines from one of his Journals; and objected to his using "incoherent scraps (by which you may make anything out of anything)" instead of using "entire

connected sentences." Wesley argued that such a procedure misinterpreted and misrepresented his actual position.[1]

I. Some Undeniable Facts

1. Wesley's entire life was marked by a quest for holiness which he in his mature years taught as a doctrine to be believed, an experience to be received, and a life to be lived. 2. Some of his statements on this doctrine appear confusing and at times contradictory unless one bears in mind that Wesley was more concerned with the life of holiness than with any theory about holiness;[2] and that he was "more interested in the experience than in its psychology";[3] and that Wesley wrote for those in all stages of spiritual development from the awakened penitents who desired "to flee the wrath to come" to those maturing fathers in Christ. Thus one finds him speaking and writing, to various ones at different times, of this great experience as a present, instantaneous attainment (which he acknowledges some to have experienced), and at other times he writes and speaks of it to others as a future and (to them) as yet "unrealized ideal."

3. Despite the fact that his teachings on Christian Perfection subjected him to abuses and calumnies by avowed enemies, and became the basis for unwarranted extremes by professed "friends" of his views, Wesley considered *his* teachings on the subject to be a vital part of his message on a free, full and felt salvation. It was discussed frequently in the "Conferences" and occupied a large place in his writings and sermons because he felt it to be a truth which God "peculiarly entrusted to the Methodists."[4] He also declared in a letter written in September, 1790, that this was "the grand depositum which God has lodged with the Methodists."[5]

4. The preaching of Christian Perfection as a present possibility aroused hostility in Wesley's day, even as it does in our own

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[1] See Wesley's *Works,* IX:22, 29, 3rd London edition: Mason, 1830, to which edition all references to *Works* in this article are made.

[2] Bishop Neely, *Doctrinal Standards of Methodism,* p. 274: Fleming H. Revell, New York, 1918.

[3] Sydney G. Dimond, *The Psychology of the Methodist Revival,* p. 242: Whitmore and Smith, Nashville, Tenn., 1926.

[4] *Works,* iv:445.

[5] See *The Letters of John Wesley,* Standard Edition, edited by Telford, viii:238: Epworth Press, London 1931.

day, because, as Dimond says, it "challenged both the moral standards and the current orthodoxy . . ."[6] 5. Nor can one dispute the fact that there is an increasing number of writers who deny that Wesley ever professed to have personally experienced the Christian Perfection which he preached to and required of others. The first such author of which this writer is aware is L. Tyerman, *The Life and Times of John Wesley.*[7] This work appeared eighty years after Wesley's death. Bishop Edwin D. Mouzon,[8] Dr. J. S. Simon,[9] Dr. R. Newton Flew,[10] Dr. Maximin Piette,[11] Bishop Francis J. McConnell,[12] Dr. W. E. Sangster,[13] and Bishop John M. Moore,[14] with one voice agree that Wesley never professed to have personally experienced Christian Perfection.

6. On the other hand, there is no disputing the fact that the writers who were personally acquainted with Wesley's terminology and profession not only do not deny his personally experiencing this great privilege and duty of the Christian life, they never intimate anything to raise a question about his having experienced it. We shall later consider statements made by some of Wesley's contemporaries; but in the meantime it seems strange for Methodist authors to repeat what Tyerman suggested about Wesley's personal experience of Christian Perfection when some of them suggest that his words about Wesley's life at College are too strong. It reminds one of the adage that what a man had rather were true, he the more readily believes. The evidence is that the farther Methodism gets from realizing that Christian Perfection is its "grand depositum," and the more unpopular its proclamation as a present, personal experience becomes, the more frequent are the denials that Wesley ever professed it as a personal experience. As long as Meth-

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[6] *Op. cit.*, p. 241.

[7] 3 vols.: Harper and Brothers, New York, 1872.

[8] *The Fundamentals of Methodism*: Lamar and Barton, 1923.

[9] *John Wesley the Master Builder*: Epworth Press, London, 1927.

[10] *The Idea of Perfection in Christian Theology*: Oxford University Press, London, 1934.

[11] *John Wesley in the Evolution of Protestantism*: Sheed and Ward, New York, 1937.

[12] *John Wesley*: The Abingdon Press, New York, 1939.

[13] *The Path to Perfection*: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1943.

[14] *Methodism in Belief and Action*: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, New York, 1946.

odism put the emphasis on a free, full, felt salvation by faith there was neither time nor place for such a denial. But when salvation by culture began to receive attention there was no felt need for the second birth; and theologians who do not proclaim the second birth cannot be expected to promote "the second blessing, properly so called," as Wesley designated it.[15] History has vindicated Wesley's views that this doctrine was vital to Methodism's spiritual progress.

II. A Glimpse of Wesley's Day

A better understanding of Wesley and the question at issue will be possible if he is measured against the prevailing conditions in Eighteenth Century England. It is unfair to judge any man by conditions which prevailed two centuries before or after his day. Green, *A Short History of the English People,*[16] deals with Wesley's day as "The Revolution." Chapters 9 and 10 will afford a clear picture of conditions between 1660 and 1815. A perusal of other sources, particularly Dr. J. S. Simon, *John Wesley and the Religious Societies,*[17] will show that despite the spiritual apathy of the most of the clergymen of that period, there was considerable religious activity. But that did not prevent its being a period of conflict and controversy, in religion as well as in politics, for the two were intimately connected through the State Church. Thus it is no wonder that often Wesley and his cause were attacked at the same time by opposing groups, one of which called him a Papist and the other a Puritan; for each feared that the Methodist movement aimed at restoring the other to power.

The clergy in general was so fearful of offending some of the contenders in the controversies that an inoffensive, colorless, impractical and ineffective type of preaching became popular. In order to maintain "moderation" and avoid the charge of "enthusiasm," theology was allowed to lose its definiteness and its vivifying power, with the result that "preaching too much generated into the mere moral essay."[18] Many came to fear that the spiritual consciousness of the masses was beyond hope of recovery. The outlook seemed almost hopeless, unless man endured as seeing the invisible.

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[15] *Letters*, vi:116.

[16] Revised Edition: Harper and Brothers, New York, 1898.

[17] Epworth Press, London, 1921.

[18] Overton. *The Evangelical Revival in the Eighteenth Century*, p. 4: A.D.F. Randolph, New York, 1886.

Wesley's day was also characterized by extravagance as well as controversy. The religious controversy over "the most fundamental points" became as acute as the political controversy, with the result that "questions of directly practical import" were ignored. England faced the sad fact that "the doctrine (of Christianity) was accepted, but the life was not lived."[19] To those who were thus so nearly morally and spiritually deadened "the grand controversy was who could outeat, outdrink, and outdress his neighbor." It is no surprise that in such an age Wesley's pure and practical teachings, coupled with his exemplary piety and noble aspirations, evoked opposition. Where he hoped to find sympathy with his religious ideals he too often found unbelief and criticism. His display of kindness and charity was rewarded with barbarous and vulgar abuse. His simplicity in speech was scorned by those who wanted the elaborate, ornate, and vehement in oratory which made them appear to possess great learning. Wesley carefully avoided all "nice and philosophical speculations" and "perplexed and intricate reasonings," as well as "those kinds of technical terms that so frequently occur in Bodies of Divinity."

The frankness with which Wesley reproved any professor of religion for his inconsistencies provoked bitter persecution. He knew "Oxford University . . . to be the residence of rakes and idlers and debauchees." It was not uncommon for clergymen to be so intoxicated, even when expounding the Bible, as to require assistance from others lest they fall. One Oxford lad wrote his mother that he had seen his tutor "carried off perfectly intoxicated." And it is said that one Oxford professor "died after drinking late at his own house with the Vice-Chancellor (who is the actual head of the University) and some others."[20]

Dr. George Peck, in *The Scriptural Doctrine of Christian Perfection,* pp. 199-200,[21] says that Wesley was called a Papist, a Ranter, a Pelagian, an enthusiast, and a heretic. He also quotes the *Works of Augustus Toplady,* wherein Toplady declares: "The

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[19] Overton, *op. cit.,* p. 6.

[20] See President Little's brochure, *John Wesley, Preacher of Scriptural Christianity,* pp. 12-15 (copyrighted 1903 by the author), for a description of conditions at Oxford and the sermon which separated Wesley from Oxford University.

[21] Lane and Sandford, New York, 1842.

supposition of possible perfection on earth is the most fanatic dream, and the most gigantic delusion which can whirl the brain of a human being." A more complete view of the various extremes and extravagances of his age can be gleaned from Dr. J. H. Whiteley's *Wesley's England,*[22] in which he paints life-size, natural-color pictures of the "artificial society" which Wesley attacked, and which in turn attacked Wesley.

As an aid to a clearer understanding of what may be involved in the question at issue—Did Wesley personally profess to have experienced Christian Perfection?—it will be well to bear in mind Whiteley's words about eighteenth-century language; for it is with *words* that we shall have to do in considering that question. Said he:

> This artificial society was also fond of hounding to death for a brief time some inoffensive word, utterly regardless of the word's derivative or accidental meaning . . . As with other centuries, the eighteenth had its full share in the change of the meaning in words themselves, and many everyday words became elevated or degraded in significance and narrowed or widened in meaning through the course of these hundred years . . . Wesley's hymns, letters, and diaries also exemplify this perpetual change in word meanings . . .[23]

III. The Basis of the Contention

Before quoting Wesley it seems best to consider the contention of those who deny that he professed Christian Perfection as a personal experience. The first assertion will be that of Dr. L. Tyerman, who, in *The Life and Times of John Wesley,* ii:598, after quoting Wesley's letter to *Lloyd's Evening Post* (London) on April 3, 1767, in which he answered attacks repeatedly made on him in the *Christian Magazine,* says:

> The above is an important letter, were it for nothing else than showing that Wesley preached a doctrine he himself did not experience. For above thirty years he had taught the doctrine of Christian perfection; but here he flatly declares, that, as yet he had not attained to it: he taught it, not because he felt it, but because he believed the Bible taught it.

In *The Standard Sermons of John Wesley,* annotated by Dr. E. H. Sugden,[24] is this comment in the introduction Dr. Sugden

[22] Epworth Press, London, 1938.
[23] *Op. cit.,* pp. 221, 224, 226.
[24] Epworth Press, London, 1921.

wrote to Sermon xxxv on Christian Perfection:

He (Wesley) never professed himself to have received it. Logically, he could see no reason why the ideal could not be at any time realized, provided a man had the requisite faith; but he came more and more to see that it was an ideal, to which the believer approximates ever more closely, though it may be impossible to say that he has absolutely attained it.

Bishop Edwin D. Mouzon in his introduction to *Fundamentals of Methodism,* wrote: "In the genesis and growth of Methodism, the true order is: First, *experience* and a *holy life,* and then *Christian doctrine.* Doctrine grows out of experience and life";[25] and on page 68 he declared:

It is interesting to know that Wesley did not himself profess it (Christian Perfection). To one who had objected to the doctrine, Mr. Wesley wrote: "I tell you flat, I have not attained the character I draw." The nearest he is known to have come to professing it was when the question whether he had ever experienced the blessing of perfect love, he replied by quoting Charles Wesley's hymn: "Jesus confirm my heart's desire . . ."

Thus it is seen that Bishop Mouzon refers to the letter Tyerman quoted, and since that letter is apparently the basis for the denial that Wesley professed to have personally experienced Christian Perfection, the letter will be given special attention in a subsequent section of this article.

Dr. J. S. Simon, in *John Wesley the Master Builder,*[26] says:

It is well known that he (Wesley) never made any claim to have reached "perfection"; but he never lost sight of the goal. He pressed forward, longing to attain daily approval of his sympathizing Judge."

Dr. R. Newton Flew, who writes in a sympathetic vein, seems more inclined to raise a question than to assert a denial; although in mentioning Thomas Walsh, "Wesley's typical helper," he says: "It is notable that he, like Wesley himself, never claimed to have attained the goal."[27] On pages 329-330, after conceding that Dr. Curtis's theory that he had found the exact time when Wesley professed to have experienced Christian Perfection could not be proved or disproved and that the passage Curtis cited was "one indication among others that he himself (Wesley) had entered into the super-

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[25] p. 8.

[26] The Epworth Press: London, 1927, p. 69.

[27] Flew, *op. cit.,* p. 323.

natural realm of conquest and abiding peace . . . ," Flew commented: "But the difficulty still remains. How did it come to pass that the apostle of the Evangelical Revival . . . himself never bore such a testimony? Was it some fastidiousness, some half-unconscious suspicion that avowal would be perilous to the health of his soul?"

Father Piette, the Catholic writer whose research on Wesley was vast, when treating "The Wesleyan Doctrine" asks:

> "And what of perfection? Can absolute perfection be attained in this world? Wesley, at times, had said so; and some of his followers have, here and there, claimed to be in this state of perfect sanctity . . . but Wesley had the good sense never to believe that he had attained to the heights of sanctity — a fact which, seeing the life he lived, says much for his deep-seated humility.[28]

But Wesley's Sermon on Christian Perfection[29] refutes the suggestion that he taught that absolute perfection was attainable in this life.

In one of his earlier books, Bishop Francis J. McConnell wrote: "Careful students of John Wesley's life have insisted that he never claimed the blessing of entire sanctification for himself."[30] But in his *John Wesley,* the bishop declared:

> It will be recalled that Wesley never claimed himself to have reached what he called "Christian Perfection." Psychologists and theologians have perused the *Journal* line by line to find some single statement on which they could themselves base a claim for such an experience for him. Some have fancied that they have found, not a claim, but a proof in a passage here or there . . .[31]

A comparatively recent author, whose book has been widely read and discussed, suggests:

> It will be felt by many that Wesley was inconsistent in making this doctrine (Christian Perfection) central in his teaching, urging his people to "press on to perfection," and to testify concerning it, yet never testifying himself . . . but whatever testifying he urged upon his people, he never said himself, "I am freed from sin . . ."[32]

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[28] Piette, *op. cit.,* p. 443.

[29] *Works,* vi:411-424.

[30] *The Essentials of Methodism,* p. 21: Methodist Book Concern, New York, 1916.

[31] *Op. cit.,* p. 314. Used by permission of copyright owners.

[32] Sangster, *op. cit.,* pp. 142-143.

One other denial will be considered sufficient. This one is from the pen of Bishop John M. Moore.

> Mr. Wesley believed in the doctrine of Christian perfection, perfect love, holiness, and entire sanctification, but he never claimed for himself the experience . . . he never gave any date for a second experience that brought Christian perfection or entire sanctification . . . He was far from being dogmatic in his opinion as to when and how sanctification came. That could not have been so with him had he been convinced by any Scripture text as to the time and manner of the experience. [33]

Only two of those who issued denials that Wesley ever professed to have experienced Christian Perfection cited any authority for their denials: Tyerman and Bishop Mouzon; and both of them cited the same document. But these two disagree on other points, for Tyerman asserts that Wesley taught Christian perfection "not because he felt it"—evidently meaning that he did not experience it—"but because he believed the Bible taught it." Bishop Mouzon compared the genesis and growth of Methodism to the history covered by the New Testament, and declared: "The true order is: First, *experience* and *a holy life,* and then *Christian doctrine.* Doctrine grows out of experience and life."

Apropos of the relation of doctrine to experience and life, Dr. Samuel Chadwick, a renowned English Methodist author, who also served as a College Principal, a President of the Methodist Conference, a President of the Southport Convention, and editor of a religious publication, wrote:

> Methodism was born of God in the warm heart of its founder . . . Wesley preached Christ as he realized Him in his own soul. The Methodist doctrines of conversion, assurance, and full salvation can be traced to marked crises in his own experience of the saving grace of God. The Methodist peculiarities of fellowship, testimony, and aggression were all first exemplified in the religious life of the first Methodist.[34]

Both Dr. Sugden and Father Piette used words that Wesley shunned to relate to personal experience. They used the terms "absolutely attained" and "absolute perfection." Knowing man's frailty, Wesley avoided any term which might suggest that man could reach a state on earth where improvement was not possible

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[33] Moore, *op. cit.,* pp. 51-52. Used by permission of copyright owners.

[34] Chadwick, *The Call to Christian Perfection,* p. 9: Epworth Press, London, 1936.

or desirable. And in his *Plain Account of Christian Perfection,*[35] Wesley declares that to have infallible proof that one has attained the experience he might profess, it would be necessary for God to endow him "with the miraculous discernment of spirits." And Wesley was so fearful that the Methodists would rest in an attained "state" that he avoided using that term, for he believed and taught that beyond the crisis of cleansing of the heart there was a necessary progressive development of the sanctified life.

Dr. Flew's query as to why Wesley did not give clear testimony to his personal experience will be treated in a subsequent section. But Dr. Sangster's denial and contention, based on Wesley's not using a specific pattern moulded for him by another a century and a half after his death, seems unreasonable—and doubly so when one knows the variety of terms Wesley used in describing this experience. He belived in the destruction of sin, and contended for it, according to his *Letters.*[36] In his correspondence with Joseph Benson Wesley declares that he used the word "destroyed" because St. Paul used it, and he did not find the word "suspended" in the Bible. In a letter to Benson, dated December 28, 1770, Wesley says:

> And you allow the whole thing which I contend for—an entire deliverance from sin, a recovery of the whole image of God, the loving God with all our heart, soul, and strength. And you believe God is able to give you this—yea, to give it to you in an instant. You trust He will.

But as to using anything which suggested "sinless perfection" Wesley avoided all such references. He knew what use his enemies and the misguided and uninformed would make of such an expression. "Sinless perfection is a phrase I never use lest I should seem to contradict myself." "Is, then, the term, *sinless perfection,* proper? It is not worth disputing about."[37]

Dr. Sangster's objection begins to lose much of its weight when one considers the varied terminology Wesley used in connection with this experience. He spoke of it as "perfect love," "glorious liberty," "full salvation," "the whole image of God," "pure love of God," "the second change," "the second blessing," "renewed in love," "full sanctification," "holiness," "a clean heart," "entire

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[35] *Works,* xi:398.

[36] v:204, 215, etc.

[37] *Works,* xi:396, 418; and *Letters,* ii:280; v:90.

sanctification," "Christian perfection," "perfected in love," "saved from sin," "entire deliverance from sin," "the root of sin taken away," "full redemption," "full renewal in His image," "sanctification," "cleansing from all sin," "renewed in love," "full liberty," etc.[38]

Bishop McConnell, in *John Wesley,* suggests that the denial that Wesley professed Christian Perfection as a personal experience presents a "strange situation" since for a half century Wesley preached it as "the heart of Methodist belief and practice." The bishop then raises two questions: (1) Whether Wesley's followers "assumed" that his personal experience was up to the standard he urged upon them; or, (2) whether they were willing to let Wesley be what he wanted to be and to say what he wanted to say, without bothering to ask questions. Since there is preserved sufficient quantities of the correspondence which passed between Wesley and his colleagues, and many others, no prolonged consideration need be given the question as to whether questions were asked about his personal experience. We know there were. He was severely criticized by some of his enemies who did not know whereof they spoke, and who were incensed because Wesley did not, for reasons he deemed sufficient to himself, tell them all he knew.[39] The select societies afforded ample opportunity for close questioning by each member concerning the personal experience of the others present. Many of the questions asked and the replies given were both forthright and unadorned. They were soul-searching. The other question as to whether his followers assumed that Wesley's experience was up to "the type" he set for them will be considered in a subsequent section of this article.

IV. Wesley Speaks for Himself

As one studies the citations from Wesley's own writings he will have a better understanding of his meaning and will be aided in arriving at a clearer conception of Wesley's position if he will bear in mind, as Piette mentions, that the years prior to 1741 were Wesley's "formation years." In them he was shaping his views and maturing them. Wesley seems to have been always "fascinated"

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[38] See Wood, J. A., *Christian Perfection as Taught by John Wesley*: McDonald and Gill, Boston, 1885.

[39] See *Letters,* v:25-27.

by the practical side of religion and he seems not to have had time for "flights of speculative imagination." At times one will question whether or not there is any coherence between some of his writings, but if it be borne in mind that all Wesley's writings are characterized by an appeal to personal religious experience he will be found to be consistent and coherent. Piette felt that

> Since practical experience and experimentation had been triumphant in the field of natural science, Wesley was led to transport it to the religious domain—to the field of the supernatural life. Around his own personal experiences, and those he was familiar with in his disciples, he gathered and polarized all his theological writings.[40]

It will also greatly assist one in better understanding Wesley's writings to remember what an incessant traveler and preacher he was, in addition to his task of preparing voluminous publications for the press, much of which was done while riding or being entertained away from access to his reference books, etc. If at different times he may be found to express himself in different ways it may be far more correct to consider that his later writings were "corrections" of his former views than contradictions of them. Bishop Neely says:

> Where we can find what he meant to be an exact use or definition, then the other uses should be explained by, and harmonized with, that, and not the exact use by the others. The precise and clear statement is to be used to interpret the uncertain, and not the reverse.

And he concludes his chapter on "Interpreting Wesley" by saying: "When one undertakes to interpret John Wesley he should take first, his specific statements, when he seeks to be exact; and, second, his maturest expressions."[41]

In Wesley's earlier days he had "an exceeding complex idea of sanctification, or a sanctified man."[42] On January 1, 1773, he preached a sermon before Oxford University on "The Circumcision of the Heart" which became the first of his published writings; and in that sermon Wesley said:

> It is that habitual disposition of soul which, in the sacred writings, is termed holiness; and which directly implies, the being cleansed "from all

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[40] Piette, *op. cit.*, p. 436.

[41] Neely, *op. cit.*, p. 273.

[42] *Works*, i:476.

filthiness of flesh and spirit"; and, by consequence, the being endued with those virtues which were in Christ Jesus; the being so "renewed in the image of our mind" as to be "perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect."

In the same sermon he also said: " 'Love is the fulfilling of the law, the end of the commandment.' It is not only 'the first and great command, but all the commandments in one.' . . ." And in 1771 he declared that this was the "view of religion I then had, which even then I scrupled not to call *perfection.* This is the view I have of it now, without any material addition or diminution."[43]

In the Preface to the second volumes of Hymns (1742) Wesley, recognizing that the dispute over Christian Perfection was now "at the height" and seeking to dispel as much as possible of the "general prejudice" which had arisen from "a misapprehension of the nature of it," set forth, as clearly as words afford, a practical description of what he meant by "one that is perfect." Such a person was one.

in whom is "the mind which was in Christ," and who so "walketh as Christ also walked"; a man that "hath clean hands and a pure heart," or that is "cleansed from all filthiness of flesh and spirit" . . . and one who, accordingly, "does not commit sin" . . . one whom God hath "sanctified throughout in body, soul, and spirit" . . . one who "walketh in the light as He is in the light, in whom is no darkness at all; the blood of Jesus Christ His Son having cleansed him from all sin" . . . In other words, to be inwardly and outwardly devoted to God; all devoted in heart and life.[44]

The Conference Minutes of 1759 contain this record:

Q. What is Christian Perfection? A. 1. The loving God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength; and our neighbor as ourselves, which implies deliverance from *all sin*: 2. That this is received *by faith*: 3. That it is given *instantaneously,* in one moment: 4. That we are to expect it (not at death) but *every moment*: 5. That *now* is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation.[45]

In Wesley's examination of those who professed to be sanctified he was exceedingly careful to ask not only whether they commited outward sins, but to ask whether they felt any inward sin. His *Journal* for March 12, 1760, reports that he spent the greater

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[43] *Works,* xi:369.

[44] *Works,* xi:383-385.

[45] Myles, *A Chronological History of the People Called Methodists,* Fourth edition, p. 84: Thomas Cordeux (Agent), London, 1813.

part of the day "examining . . . one by one" many who professed to believe that they were saved from sin. He was convinced (1) that they feel no inward sin, and to the best of their knowledge commit no outward sin; (2) that they see and love God every moment, and pray, rejoice, give thanks evermore; (3) that they have constantly as clear witness from God of sanctification as they have of justification. "Now in this I do rejoice, and will rejoice, call it what you please; and I would to God that thousands had experienced thus much, let them afterward experience as much more as God pleases." Thus while he did not contend over the name by which the experience was called, he was careful to see that those who professed to have the experience manifested the life that proved Christian perfection to be practical as well as theoretical. His words about experiencing as much as God pleases shows that he did not consider this a finality, but a fitness for service.

In 1767 Wesley wrote: "By perfection I mean the humble, gentle, patient love of God and our neighbor, ruling our tempers, words, and actions . . . I do not contend for the term sinless, though I do not object against it . . ." One has said that Wesley was not dogmatic about the time and manner of receiving the experience; but he does speak clearly and positively about "the manner and time of receiving it" in his writings.

> As to the manner. I believe this perfection is always wrought in the soul by a simple act of faith; consequently, in an instant. But I believe a gradual work, both preceding and following that instant. As to the time. I believe this instant is generally the instant of death . . . But I believe it may be ten, twenty, or forty years before. I believe it is usually many years after justification; but that it may be within five years or five months after it, I know no conclusive argument to the contrary. If it must be many years after justification, I would be glad to know how many . . .[46]

Wesley, with his realistic view of life, admitted that there usually was a delay between the two experiences, because some times there were those who needed to be instructed as to the nature and conditions of the experience. But such a delay was not *necessary*. The great theological controversies of the day often raged about the words "necessary" and "necessity" and so Wesley demands proof that a long delay is necesary.

His letter to his brother Charles, dated June 27, 1766, shows

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[46] *Works*, xi:446.

how urgent John Wesley was to have the instantaneousness of this blessing pressed.

O insist everywhere on *full redemption,* receivable by faith alone! Consequently to be looked for *now.* You are *made,* as it were, for this very thing. Just here you are in your element. In connexion I beat you; but in strong, pointed sentences you beat me. Go on, in your *own way,* in what God has peculiarly called you to do. Press the *instantaneous* blessing: then I shall have more time for my peculiar calling, enforcing the gradual work.[47]

At the Conference of 1768, following several years of disappointments and controversies and apparent decline of the work, the question arose as to how God's work might be revived and enlarged. One suggestion was: Preach Christian Perfection! It was to be preached "as a gradual and instantaneous blessing" with believers reminded that it was their privilege. Thereupon, Mr. Wesley said:

That we all may speak the same thing, I ask, once for all, shall we defend this Perfection, or give it up? You all agree to defend it, meaning thereby, as we did from the beginning, Salvation from all sin by the love of God and our neighbor filling the heart . . . You are all agreed, we may be saved from all sin *before death.* The *substance* then is settled. But as to the circumstance. Is the change *instantaneous* or *gradual?* It is both the one and the other. From the movement we are justified, there may be a *gradual sanctification,* or a growing in grace, a daily advance in the knowledge and love of God. And if sin cease before death, there must in the nature of the thing be an instantaneous change. There must a last movement when it does exist and a first moment wherein it does not . . .[48]

The conclusion of the matter was:

Whoever would advance the gradual change in believers should strongly insist upon the instantaneous because when the hope of an instantaneous deliverance from sin is destroyed, "salvation stands still, or rather decreases daily."

Lest some one say that this desire to press the instantaneous blessing waned as Wesley grew older, consider his letter to Sarah Rutter, dated December 5, 1789 (sixteen months before his death): "Full deliverance from sin, I believe is always instantaneous—at least I never yet knew an exception . . ."[49]

In his sermon on *The Scriptural Way of Salvation,* Wesley de-

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[47] *Letters,* v:16.

[48] Myles, *op. cit.,* p. 124f.

[49] *Letters,* viii:190.

fines "salvation" as including "the entire work of God, from the first dawning of grace in the soul, till it is consummated in glory." That agress with Wesley's views that sanctification begins in regeneration, is made full or entire in the second crisis or experience which Wesley designates "the second blessing" or "the second change" as he may choose, and is subsequently perfected and developed by growth in grace and in the knowledge and love of God.[50] "This (salvation) consists of two general parts, justification and sanctification. Justification is another word for pardon."[51] And in the state of pardon, with sanctification begun, "we wait for entire sanctification; for a full salvation from all our sins—from pride, self-will, anger, unbelief; or as the Apostle expresses it, 'go on unto perfection.' But what is perfection? The word has various senses: here it means perfect love. It is love excluding sin; love filling the heart, taking up the whole capacity of the soul . . ."[52]

Bishop Mouzon quotes Wesley thus: "I mean loving God with all our heart and our neighbor as ourselves. I pin all its opponents to this definition. No evasion. No shifting the question." In his words to those who cavil about professors of holiness not meeting their expectation, because, as Wesley told them, they included more in *their* demands of such "perfect" Christians than the Scriptures warranted, he said: "Pure love reigning alone in the heart and life—this is the whole of scriptural perfection."[53] It will be well to remember the words of this paragraph when considering the alleged denial of perfection as a personal experience by John Wesley.

As to the *condition* for receiving sanctification, Wesley declared that it is received by faith.

> Faith is the condition, and the only condition, of sanctification, exactly as it is of justification. It is the *condition*: none is sanctified but he that believes; without faith no man is sanctified. And it is the *only condition*: this alone is sufficient for sanctification. Every one that believes is sanctified, whatever else he has or has not. In other words, no man is sanctified till he believes: every man when he believes is sanctified . . . But what is that faith whereby we are sanctified—saved from sin, and perfected in love? It is a divine evidence and conviction, first, that God hath promised it in

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[50] For a detailed study of Wesley's views on sanctification as a part of the process of salvation, one is referred to Harald Lindstrom, *Wesley and Sanctification*, A Study in the Doctrine of Salvation: Epworth Press, London.

[51] See Sugden, *op. cit.*, ii:445.

[52] *Ibid.*, ii:448.

[53] *Works*, xi:401.

the holy Scriptures . . . secondly, that what God hath promised He is able to perform . . . thirdly, that He is able and willing to do it now. And why not? . . . To this confidence, that God is both able and willing to sanctify us now, there needs to be added one thing more– a divine evidence and conviction that He doeth it. In that hour it is done . . .[54]

Faith, scriptural faith, meant to Wesley that "attitude of the human mind by which it realizes the invisible, the imponderable and intangible, and actualizes them in time and space for divine purposes. It cooperates with the will of God."[55] Thus to John Wesley, if one had true faith in the power, promises, and purposes of God there was nothing unreasonable in the believer's praying for Christian perfection and expecting God to give it to him when he prayed and believed for it, thus granting him his prayer for deliverance from sin and the assurance of the Spirit.

V. The Cause of the Contention

Two sentences in one letter that John Wesley wrote seem the basis of the insistent denial that he ever professed to have experienced perfect love, or entire sanctification. This letter to the Editor of *Lloyd's Evening Post* (London), dated March 5, 1767, was published on April 3, 1767. An explanation of its origin and contents is in order. In 1756 a popular young clergyman of London, afterward the famous Dr. Dodd, questioned Wesley on his views concerning Christian Perfection, and Wesley, then twice the young man's age, courteously replied. The young man was admittedly one of London's most popular young ministers, able but extravagant and vain. To augment his income he wrote for the religious press, and the *Christian Magazine* gave him one hundred pounds per year for his services. At length, after Dodd, using an assumed name, had misrepresented Wesley's views and had unjustly misrepresented the Methodists and their cause, Wesley reluctantly made a public reply. The letter, too long to be quoted here, may be found in Tyerman's *Life and Times of John Wesley,* ii:597-598; and in *The Journal of John Wesley,* Standard edition by Curnock, v:197-198;[56] or *Letters,* v:43-44. Seven years after this letter was published,

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[54] Sugden, *op. cit.,* ii:451, 457, 458.

[55] Eayrs, *John Wesley, Christian Philosopher and Church Founder,* p. 160: Epworth Press, London, 1926.

[56] Epworth Press, London, 1938.

Dodd's effort to secure a lucrative appointment by bribery exposed him to public scorn and he retired to France, where he lived for three years. Returning to England in 1777, he forged a draft for a large sum. He was convicted and sentenced to be hanged, and despite a great appeal in his behalf he was hanged as a felon. But between his arrest and his execution he sought help from Wesley and the Methodists whom he had misrepresented and abused, and they kindly ministered to him until his execution. In this, they returned good for evil, as they preached.

In his correspondence of March 12, 1756, Wesley declared to Dodd that by his teaching on Christian Perfection "I never meant any *more* by perfection than the loving God with all our heart and serving Him with all our strength. But I dare not say *less* than this . . ." Wesley also made it plain to him that in his view of perfection there was the possibility and need for continual development in the life of one who had been made perfect in love. But it was Dodd's misrepresentation of statements in Wesley's article entitled *The Character of a Methodist* that caused Wesley "to enter the lists with him." Dodd had said: A Methodist, according to Mr. Wesley, is one who is perfect, and sinneth not in thought, word, or deed." That was making Wesley say words he never used and did not intend to use. Wesley was careful with his words and wanted each one used as *he* intended it, and as he interpreted it. Repeatedly in his controversies he showed the unfairness of adding, omitting, or otherwise misusing even *one* word. Thus, this exact man in the midst of careless men would not allow a wilful misrepresentation of his supposedly direct words to go unreproved. He knew that Dodd held erroneous views on perfection, and that he sought every possible opportunity to misrepresent the Methodists, whom he accused of intending a secession from the Church. Desirous of defending the truth and of rebuking such flagrant abuse of one's words, Wesley sent a letter to the public press in which appear these sentences: "I have told all the world, I am not perfect; and yet you allow me to be a Methodist. I tell you flat, I have not attained the character I draw . . ." Then Wesley passes to deny the charge that "other Methodists have" attained perfection in the sense Dodd had intended to claim for them. His words are: "I say no such thing." He thereupon declared that after setting forth a scriptural portrait of a perfect Christian he had written: "By these marks the Meth-

odists *desire* to be distinguished from other men; by these we *labor* to distinguish ourselves." In this letter Wesley does not deny Christian perfection as a personal possession any more than de denies that any Methodist possessed it. He denied being perfect in the incorrect, unscriptural and unreasonable sense that Dodd and his school of thinkers would have liked to have fastened upon them; but the seeker after truth must consider the words in their setting and not isolate them from their context and from the situations facing Wesley in this controversy.

In this connection, Wesley knew that those who enjoyed the highest possible state of grace attainable on earth must dwell in shattered bodies and were thereby so pressed down at times that they could not always exert themselves as they would by speaking, thinking, and acting precisely right. He was consistent therefore in denying that he or his followers professed to be "perfect" in the sense their detractors charged. Wesley had written:

> For want of better bodily organs, they must at times think, speak, or act wrongly; not indeed through a defect of love, but through a defect of knowledge; and while this is the case, notwithstanding that defect and its consequences, they fulfill the law of love.[57]

But to get the full sense of Wesley's meaning in these two sentences, and to appreciate the purpose of the whole letter in question, one ought to read the last few lines of this "imporant" letter. Wesley's attackers consider the profession of "perfection" to involve practically a renunciation of one's dependence upon the mercy of God and the merits of the Savior. Wesley's denial of that kind of perfection for himself and the Methodists was laudable, not blameable. He was thinking of their going to the table of the Lord for communion, and by his denial of any professed experience that trusted in self instead of the Savior, he was removing them from the suspicion of insincerity when they went to the table of the Lord. Thus a great deal more was at issue in the letter Wesley wrote than whether or not he personally professed a certain experience which he taught as desirable and possible, as well as scriptural.

Concerning this letter and the use now made of it, perhaps it will be well to bear in mind that Wesley lived twenty-four years after it was published. Insofar as can be ascertained, he was never called in question by a colleague or the Conference over it, nor did

[57] *Works*, xi:419.

he deem it needful to offer any explanation for it in his writings. None of his contemporaries who wrote an account of his life and times felt it needful to mention, explain, or otherwise account for the statement. Insofar as is known to this writer, Tyerman, who published his works more than a century after the letter appeared in print, is the first to use it as a proof that Wesley disclaimed Christian Perfection as a personal experience. It is apparent that Wesley, his followers, and his critics understood what he meant and were satisfied with his explanation.

One of the bishops quoted as affirming that Wesley did not profess the personal experience of Christian perfection bases his position on Wesley's not saying so in the exact words of a forthright claim. But the bishop took the position that one's profession to be perfect would be the positive proof that he was not perfect. By that line of reasoning one might expect him to concede that Wesley possessed the experience but modestly refrained from professing it lest he be accused of boasting. But, instead, he feels that he did not have it, or he would have professed it; although his reasoning would be that if he had professed it that would have proved he did not have it.

VI. Did Wesley Profess Christian Profection?

It is believed that there is evidence enough to satisfy any unprejudiced person that Wesley did profess Christian Perfection. Since it was his correspondence with Dodd that evoked the letter which has been cited to deny Wesley's profession of Christian Perfection, consistency would lead one to study their correspondence on the subject of Perfection. On March 12, 1756, Wesley wrote Dodd and mentioned his sermon on *Salvation By Faith* and dealt with Dodd's use of his words about the believer's freedom from sin. Then comes this comment: "I must still aver they (the Scripture used) speak both my own experience and that of many hundred children of God whom I personally know."[58]

Wesley's personal experience was criticized by some who claimed that by their discernment he was not living as close to God as he should. Candidly Wesley asked who knew whether he lived more or less closely with God, and attributed such accusations to their "surmisings" with which God was not pleased. He acknow-

[58] *Letters*, iii:168.

ledged in this letter that it was hard for him to speak of himself, but he said: "*You* know something by my *own* testimony." Thus Wesley indicated that he did speak more freely to some than to others about his personal experience and relationship to God. But in this connection there are other words that are highly important in this study of his personal experience. He said that if his critics would observe his "outward walking"—which was the acid test of a profession, in Wesley's estimate—he was "bold to say" that they would "see nothing but what might become Gregory Lopez."[59]

It is the mention of Lopez that arrests our attention. No student of Wesley's personal experience of perfection seems to have given this reference serious thought. Lopez was a Spanish missionary to the West Indies, and Wesley read and re-read his life, carrying a long account of his life and labors in the *Armininan Magazine* in 1780 and including a life of Lopez in his *Christian Library*. Wesley's words in connection with Lopez are these:

> For years I despaired of finding any inhabitant of Great Britain that could stand in any degree of comparison with Gregory Lopez or M. de Renty. But let any impartial person judge if Mr. Fletcher was at all inferior to them.[60]

By thus connecting and comparing his own "outward walking" with Lopez, and by connecting Lopez with the sainted Fletcher, Wesley is modestly and truthfully testifying to his own attainments in the grace of God. Lopez further influenced Wesley in his reticence about speaking all he knew. Wesley vindicated his silence, when words would have satisfied many, by saying: "I answer with him (Lopez), 'I do not speak all I know, but what I judge needful.' "[61] Thus there was a reason for Wesley's silence as well as for his speech.

In the *Plain Account of Christian Perfection*, the question is asked: "How may we certainly know one that is saved from all sin?" And after an explanation as to the difference between knowing "infallibly," which would involve the possession of the divine gift of discernment of spirits, comes the answer:

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[59] *Letters*, v:25-26.

[60] *Journal*, iii:42.

[61] Tyerman, *op. cit.*, iii:13.

We would deem these to be sufficient proofs to any reasonable man, and such as would leave little room to doubt either the truth or depth of the work: (1.) If we had clear evidence of his exemplary behavior for some time before this supposed change. This would give us reason to believe, he would not "lie for God," but speak neither more nor less than he felt; (2.) If he gave a distinct account of the time and manner wherein the change was wrought, with sound speech which could not be reproved; and, (3.) If it appeared that all his subsequent words and actions were holy and unblamable.[62]

In reading the *Plain Account* one detects a decided change of tone in some of the questions which, in view of the different views of some members of the "Conference" out of which these questions and answers grew, is of importance. At some points Wesley generalizes with such expressions as "we," "you," "one," "he," etc. But when he cites his own views he uses the first person, "I." A case in point: They were discussing how to distinguish between "temptation" and "corruption of the heart." There Wesley uses the personal pronoun, "I." "I feel no pride"; "I feel no anger at all"; "I feel no desire or lust at all"; and he continues by saying: "The difference is still plainer when I compare my present state with my past, wherein I felt temptation and corruption too." This personal testimony is followed at once by a specific question: "How do you know that you are sanctified—saved from your inbred corruption?" The answer comes equally direct:

I can know it no otherwise than I know I am justified. "Hereby know we that we are of God (in either sense), by the Spirit He hath given us." We know it by the witness and fruit of the Spirit . . .

And in this same paragraph Wesley uses the expression: "When we were sanctified, He (the Spirit) bore witness that they (our sins) were taken away" (as distinguished from "forgiven" "when we were justified".[63]

One of the authorities cited as denying Wesley's personal profession of Christian Perfection complained that Wesley did not bear "testimony." Let him ponder these words: "I have continually testified in private and in public, that we are sanctified as well as justified by faith." If Wesley's words mean anything the following quotation from a letter to Lady Huntingdon, dated June 19,

[62] *Works,* xi:398.
[63] *Works,* xi:419-420.

1771, sheds light on the question:

Many years since I saw that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord." I began following after it and inciting all with whom I had any intercourse to do the same. Ten years after, God gave me a clearer view than I had before of the way to attain this—namely, by faith in the Son of God. And immediately I declared to all, "We are saved from sin, we are made holy, by faith." This I testified in private, in public, in print; and God confirmed it by a thousand witnesses. I have continued to declare this for above thirty years, and God hath continued to confirm the word of His grace.[65]

This item is recorded in the *Journal* for October 28, 1762:

Many years ago my brother frequently said, "Your day of Pentecost is not fully come; but I doubt not it will: And you will then hear of persons sanctified as frequently as you do now of persons justified." Any unprejudiced reader may observe that it was now fully come.[66]

A fuller description of this is given elsewhere. "Any unprejudiced person who has read the accounts in my Journals may observe, that it was now fully come.[67] And this author observed that Wesley "frequently noted the work at this time, as being what St. Paul calls, The Perfecting of the Saints."

During the Bell-Maxfield controversy, on November 2, 1762, Wesley wrote Thomas Maxfield and commented with his usual candor ("and he never failed in candor," according to Flew) upon what he liked and disliked in the teachings and conduct of Maxfield, Bell and their associates.

I like your doctrine of Perfection, or pure love; love excluding sin; your insisting that it is merely by faith; that consequently it is instantaneous (though preceded and followed by a gradual work), and that it may be now, at this instant . . . I dislike the saying, This was not known or taught among us till within two or three years. I grant you did not know it. You have over and over denied instantaneous sanctification to me; but I have known and taught it (and so has my brother, as our writings show) above these twenty years.[68]

Many believe that the moment Wesley experienced Christian Perfection is recorded in his *Journal* for December 24-25, 1744.

In the evening, while I was reading prayers at Snowsfield, I found such

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[64] Sugden, ii:453.
[65] *Letters,* v:258-259.
[66] *Works,* iii:116.
[67] Myles, *op. cit.,* p. 87.
[68] *Letters,* iv:192.

light and strength as I never remember to have had before. I saw every thought, as well as action or word, just as it was rising in my heart; and whether it was right before God or tainted with pride or selfishness. I never knew before (I mean not as at that time) what it was "to be still before God." I waked by the grace of God in the same spirit; and about eight, being with two or three that believed in Jesus, I felt such an awe and tender sense of the presence of God as greatly confirmed me therein: so that God was before me all the day long. I sought and found Him in every place; and could truly say, when I lay down at night, "Now I have *lived* a day."[69]

That testimony, measured by the tests to which he subjected the professors of Christian Perfection, according to his *Journal* for March 12, 1760, bears striking resemblance in many respects. And Dr. Olin A. Curtis comments thus on the Journal entry for December 24-25, 1744:

To any one familiar with John Wesley's careful, realistic manner of speech it is evident that we have here the same sort of testimony to the experience of holiness that we have in his Journal, May 24, 1738, to the experience of conversion. If the one is not quite so near a full definition as the other, it surely is just as expressive of the fact. I find it almost impossible to read Wesley's words in the light of all his later utterances about the doctrine of Christian perfection, and not consider this date, December 24, 1744, as the probable time when he began to love God supremely.[70]

This date agrees in general with the dates occasionally mentioned by Wesley in connection with the doctrine of Christian Perfection as it was understood and set forth by him and his brother. Unfortunately Wesley's dates were not always as specific as one might wish on some points, but this is nothing against the fact of his experiencing this great grace. Dr. Mae A. Tenney of Greenville College (Illinois), a careful student of Wesley, says:

Wesley does very little direct witnessing in his sermons and articles and *Journal*. Only once he wrote of his heart-warming. And note, moreover, that he does not in that instance employ theological phraseology. One feels that Wesley avoided conventional, rubber-stamp terms.[71]

The value of the hymns as testimonies cannot be overlooked. When John Wesley went to use one of Dr. Henry More's hymns on "The Descent of the Holy Ghost on the Day of Pentecost" in

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[69] *Journal*, iii:157.

[70] *The Christian Faith*, p. 376: Eaton and Mains, New York, 1905. Reproduced by permission of the copyright owners.

[71] *The Wesleyan Message*, p. 182: Light and Life Press, Winona Lake, Indiana, 1940.

the 1739 edition of *Hymns and Sacred Poems,*[72] he changed the phraseology of this godly and contemplative man so that his words dealt with a personal and present blessing, instead of a wistful hope. The words *were*:

> Grant this, O holy God and true,
> Who the ancient prophets did inspire;
> Haste to perform Thy promise due,
> As all Thy servants Thee desire.

But Wesley altered them to read, in the last two lines:

> To *us* perform the promise due;
> Descend and crown *us now* with fire.[73]

Consider also, in connection with Wesley's profession, that grand old hymn that he and the early Methodists sang, which closed with these verses:

> Saviour, to Thee my soul looks up,
> My present Saviour Thou:
> In all the confidence of hope,
> I claim the blessing now.
>
> 'Tis done: Thou dost this movement save,
> With full salvation bless;
> Redemption through Thy blood I have
> And spotless love and peace.

And so we conclude: despite Wesley's reticence in speaking of his own personal religious experience, lest he be accused of being a theological innovator or attract attention to himself and thereby detract attention from the gospel truths he wished men to accept; and lest he be accused of boasting and thereby injure the cause of Christ; and lest his testimony attract further hostility toward the members of the Methodists societies, we believe he did meekly, clearly and sufficiently witness to Christian Perfection as a personal experience and that his testimony leaves "no room for doubt that he professed to have the experience, and that he preached the doctrine of Christian Perfection and exhorted and encouraged his followers to seek it."[74]

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[72] Number 185.

[73] *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine,* 1867, pp. 23-30.

[74] Bishop W. F. Mallalieu, in Wood's *Christian Perfection as Taught by John Wesley,* p. 7.

Joseph H. Smith and His View of Scripture

DELBERT R. ROSE

Usually students of revivalism have not associated "the study" with the camp meeting, nor scholarly aptitude with the soul-winning art. These two emphasis, however, seem to have met, merged, and remained inseparable in the ministry of the Reverend Mr. Joseph H. Smith, 1855-1946.

Mr. Smith, for sixty years a member of the Philadelphia Conference of the Methodist Church, has been esteemed by some a foremost expositor-evangelist of the Wesleyan movement in America. After a period of pastoral service within his home conference, Smith became identified with the Methodistic movement known as the National Campmeeting Association for the Promotion of Holiness. He rapidly rose to a place of spiritual leadership within that movement which was dedicated to the task of propagating interdenominationally the Wesleyan interpretation of the doctrine of holiness.

Smith's life touched both the original leaders of the National Campmeeting Association for the Promotion of Holiness (now called the National Holiness Association), organized in 1867, under whom he was schooled in thought and methods, and the majority of the younger, present-day leaders of this movement. No other man in the movement has shared with Smith this distinction. He gave more years of consecutive service than any other one leader to the specific purpose of promoting "Scriptural holiness" through the various channels of this interdenominational organization.

Dean of Holiness Expositors

Smith excelled in the exposition of the Scriptures. This was evidenced by the way he was repeatedly called to the same camp grounds year after year, a record unparalleled by any other teacher in the Holiness Movement.

The Scriptural Doctrine of Scripture

Since for Smith the seat of authority for the Christian faith was the Bible, the Scriptures' teaching concerning themselves was of utmost importance. He could not allow the Scriptures' testimony to themselves to be questioned and still retain as valid what they had said about God, man, sin, Christ and salvation.[1]

Citing Jesus's and the apostles' attitude toward the Old Testament—which Scriptures alone were extant in Jesus's time—Smith felt Scripturally bound to hold "the written Word" and the "spoken Word of God" as inseparable. He found a basis in Christ's and the apostles' teachings for esteeming the New Testament as sacred, inviolable and authoritative as they had regarded the Old Testament.[2] Of the whole Bible he affirmed: "We need *no other authority or proof* for what we declare, than that it is plainly taught in the Bible. It it is there, God hath spoken it."[3]

Two passages clearly voiced for him the basic doctrine of Scripture: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect . . ." ". . . no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."[5]

Revelation And Inspiration

In Smith's view, the divine will and plan for all time have been supernaturally revealed, objectively recorded, and providentially preserved in the Holy Bible for the salvation of all mankind. In that sense revelation has ceased and is final.

But the appropriation and application of that revealed salvation in each individual's life and service is unrevealed and unrecorded until personally received by faith in each believer's life. In that

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[1] Smith, "The Spirit's Light," *The Pentecostal Herald,* September 22, 1937, p. 4.

[2] John 14:36; 16:13-15; 2 Pet. 3:15, 16. See Smith, *Things Of The Spirit,* pp. 69f.

[3] Smith, "God Hath Spoken," *God's Revivalist,* June 3, 1926, p. 11.

[4] 2 Tim. 3:16, 17.

[5] II Pet. 1:20, 21.

sense "revelation" may be said to be continuous through the Holy Spirit's illuminating and teaching ministry to each individual.

> . . . revelation is for the *whole* Christian world and deals with the things of the kingdom *in general,* while illumination is for the individual Christian, in the interpretation and application of revelation and in the discovery of one's own place and the direction of his own path in the way and in the work of the kingdom here.[6]

While there was repeated and progressive revelation within the Old Testament Scriptures for Israel, yet for both Israel and the Church revelation reached its perfection in Christ and the apostles, and then ceased (with the death of the last apostle) for this Gospel era or dispensation. *Continuous* revelation was not known even in Israel, for there were periods, such as the inter-testamental era, when no *new* revelation was given.

In all the progress of the Christian centuries, Smith maintained, neither theologians, philosophers, nor scientists have either added or changed a single doctrine of Biblical theology as the apostles knew it. The apostles and prophets had scaled, by supernatural assistance, the mountain peaks of spiritual truth and what they saw they set forth in the Scriptures. The history of Christianity is evidence that the recovery of lost truth, rather than "revelation" or the "discovery" of any new truth, has produced and marked the revivalistic and fruitful periods within the Church.

Smith *cautiously* distinguished between the Word of God and the Scriptures. The Word of God existed prior to and in some instances apart from the Scripture for centuries, and even Jesus's words—the very Words of Life—were not in written form at first. Even many Israelites, not understanding the meaning and application of their own written Scriptures, were still without "the Word of God." The same principle obtains in this New Testament era, for "many persons have Bibles and have Biblical scholarship that do not know what God has said." Nevertheless, Christians this side of the primitive Church have not had "the Word of God against or apart from the Scriptures," even though many may have had the Scriptures without having "the Word of God." Having the *body of* Scripture, without the Spirit who inspired them, is to be without the "Word of God." To have the "Word of God" one must have

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[6] Smith, "Light On Our Pathway," *God's Revivalist,* October 28, 1929, p. 2.

both the letter of Scripture and the living Spirit illuminating that letter to the believing mind.[7]

"Special" or "supernatural revelation" brings to man what God has not revealed or is undiscoverable by man elsewhere. "In the Bible is revealed everything that is necessary to salvation, and *what God has revealed elsewhere is not enough to save men's souls.*"[8] Revelation itself, however, is not salvation, although necessary for it. For without this revelation to man's faith, he is left at Mar's hill with a "forestry of interrogation points as to deity and eternity," and in Athens before the altar to the unknown god.[9]

Smith rejected any mechanical theory of inspiration by which special revelation was brought to men. He held a more "dynamic view" by which the Holy Spirit so supernaturally supplemented the limitations and frailities of the prophets and apostles, without destroying their individuality, as to produce an accurate record of precisely what God wanted permanently preserved in Scriptures.[10]

> Inspiration is that movement of God's Spirit upon the memory, perception and imagination of men's mind, whereby His revealed Truth is communicated to man, and that movement upon his language by tongue whereby it is transmitted from His chosen agents to the people to whom it is addressed. This is the Word. And when this transmission was by His wisdom, carried from direct speech and from tradition to writing under divine guidance, help and control, this gave us the Scriptures. And again, God's message to men, thus in Scripture is the Word of God.[11]

At least six things were sufficient proof for Smith of the inspiration, and therefore of the reliability and divine authority, of the Scriptures: (1) their enduring universality;[12] (25) their inherent, superhuman content; (3) the "unlettered" authors, such as Peter and John, who wrote such epistles as the Epistles of John

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[7] Smith, "The Scriptures and the Word of God," *Heart and Life*, August 1923, pp. 18, 19.

[8] Smith, "The Inspiration and Interpretation of the Scripture," *op. cit.*, December 1919, pp. 13, 14, 16.

[9] Smith, *Things Of The Spirit*, pp. 33, 34.

[10] Smith, "Spiritual Life Suggestions," *The Christian Witness*, March 18, 1937, p. 10.

[11] Smith, "Private Interpretations"; "The Holy Scriptures"; "The Word of Christ," *Heart and Life*, February 1924, p. 7.

[12] Smith, "Spiritual Life Suggestions," *The Christian Witness*, December 17, 1936, pp. 12, 13.

and the Epistles of Peter;[13] (4) the effects of the Scriptures upon the morals and spirits of men; (5) the testimony of such enduring, superhuman, and effective writings to their own origin and nature;[14] and (6) the literal fulfillment of the Old Testament Scriptures concerning the Birth, Life, Ministry, Death and Resurrection of Christ.[15]

Inspiration and Illumination

The Holy Spirit is the one source of both divine inspiration and of spiritual illumination, whose objective in each is to produce salvation. The illumination, which the Spirit imparts, differs mainly *in degree* from the inspiration given to the prophets and apostles. There is no new revelation (either in germ or norm) given, but only the assistance necessary to understand and apply that which has been revealed for salvation in this dispensation.

> We fully believe that God's mind was revealed to the writers of the Bible, so that the internal revelation might be handed down to us, but we further believe that God will so quicken our spiritual and mental powers by His blessed Holy Spirit that we will first appropriate the same, and then in turn, reproduce these ideas and transmit them to the minds of others. This may be termed either "direct illumination," or rather, the revelation of God.
>
> . . . while the Holy Ghost does neither substitute nor supersede Scripture by His direct illuminations, He does open the secrets of the same, apply the principles thereof, and inspire and authorize timely and personal applications of the same in living messages of faith. The Bible is not a casket in which the Spirit of revelation is buried; it is a jewel box from the gems of which the living Spirit of Light radiates.[16]

Just as "inspiration," reserved alone for the prophets and apostles, brought them knowledge which neither genius nor progress in learning could attain, so "illumination," falling upon that which has been revealed through uniquely inspired men, brings the Christian knowledge unattainable by the highest intellectual reach of unillumined minds. As it required "inspiration" for the prophets to receive and show these things to others, so it requires "illumination" for men to receive and understand these "revealed truths"

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[13] Smith, "Be Ye Holy," *Heart and Life,* November 1928, pp. 6, 9.

[14] Smith, "The Inspiration and Interpretation of the Scritptures," *Heart and Life,* December 1919, pp. 13, 14, 16.

[15] Smith, "Question Box," *The Christian Witness,* January 20, 1938, p. 6.

[16] Smith, "Inspiration and Illumination," *Heart and Life,* December 1926, p. 10.

today. "Both are divine. But they are not equal." Yet both are necessary, if God is to be known.[17] Since "the world by wisdom knew not God," that which brings the knowledge of God to man, namely, divine inspiration and illumination, correspondingly transcend human intelligence as the latter transcends animal instinct.[18]

Illumination and Interpretation

The Spirit's illumination of the human mind is requisite to grasping the "Word of God." While Biblical scholarship brings to light interesting facts *about* the Scriptures, only by spiritual discernment, immediately given by the Holy Spirit, can men apprehend that "saving truth" as it is in Jesus which alone brings eternal life. Nor is this illumination securable to any but penitent souls who are seeking the light.[19]

> . . . as Inspiration was needed to give us a correct and completed Revelation of God, so Illumination is necessary to give us a correct and complete understanding of the will and way of God and also of God Himself. And Jesus has come to give us such an understanding. In nature man was in darkness, and in ignorance of God . . . By Grace we are made capable of knowing God. And by the Spirit's Illumination "we behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord" . . .[20]

While following the Protestant principle in stressing individual study of the Scriptures, Smith warned against "private interpretations" which violated any plain teaching of the Bible or substituted one's own opinions or supposed "illuminations" for the best light of sanctified, scholarly study of the Bible.[21] Remembering that considerable of the Biblical message is presented in the form of sign and symbol, Smith cautioned against personal fancy, or hasty, superficial treatment governing the reader in his interpretation of the Scriptures. "The diligence of a student and the devotion of a worshipper is required to decipher God's sign language aright."[22]

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[17] Smith, "Education! Inspiration! Illumination!" *op. cit.*, May 1925, p. 8.

[18] Smith, *Things Of The Spirit*, pp. 27f.

[19] Smith, "The Spirit's Light," *The Pentecostal Herald*, September 22, 1937, p. 4.

[20] Smith, "Education! Inspiration! Illumination!" *Heart and Life*, May 1925, p. 9.

[21] Smith, "Question Box," *op. cit.*, December 1920, p. 19; Smith, "The Scriptures and the Word of God," *op. cit.*, August 1923, pp. 18, 19.

[22] Smith, "Expository Suggestion," *Heart and Life*, July 1924, pp. 8f.

For Smith one of the plainest and most valid of all rules of interpretation—of Scripture or any other book—was that literature should be "understood as bearing its plain and primary literal sense, unless a good reason can be given why it should be understood otherwise."[23] His "qualified literalism" displayed itself in his treatment of the book of Revelation, "the most pictorial in the whole Bible."

> And as in other instances of Scriptural rhetoric—as the description of the holy city on the one hand, and the fiery torments of hell upon the other, we must penetrate into their higher and deeper significance than of anything merely material and physical, so must we pray for anointed eyes to see through the angel's "signs" for that which is infinitely more glorious or even more terrible that may be signified thereby.[24]

Believing that all the truths, principles and laws underlying *all* Scripture are applicable to every day and age, Smith held that "the *application* of them under the differences of the Spirit's administration (see I Cor. 12:5) will vary . . . with the differences in the days and the times."[25] For example, "the harlotry stigma of a woman's shaven or *shorn* head in Paul's day" may pass away with the "change in society or in women" which causes it to mean less in this day.[26] Consequently Smith enjoined Bible students thus: "Study the customs of the times in the light of what is written and see what abiding principle is in the midst of that particular custom."[27]

He laid down five rules which he himself had followed in interpreting the English Bible: first, the right understanding and use of the English language; second, the rule of a holy purpose in studying the Scriptures; third, the right key to unlock its treasures, both in the Old and New Testaments, which is Christ; fourth, the proper aim of finding out the things God has not revealed elsewhere; and fifth, the rule of dependence upon the Holy Spirit, who inspired the Word, to bring illumination to the reader's heart

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[23] Smith, unpublished articles in F. S. Teed collection, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

[24] Smith, "Expository Suggestion," *op. cit.*, pp. 8, 9.

[25] Smith, "Question Lecture Drawer," *Heart and Life*, March 1918, p. 13.

[26] Smith, unpublished articles in F. S. Teed collection, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

[27] Smith, "Question Lecture Drawer," *op. cit.*, March 1918, p. 13.

and mind.[28] Following those rules Smith found an inner unity of theme and harmony of objective and progression of movement within the Scriptures which led him to believe there were no contradictions within the Bible, but that if seeming contradictions appeared they existed in the Bible reader, due to lack of scholarly information or spiritual illumination, rather than in the Bible itself.

Christ in the Scriptures

All revelation for Smith was Christocentric and all illumination rested upon what had been revealed of Christ in the Scriptures. At no time, he affirmed, is the personal Christ lost sight of when believers are under the "illumination of the Spirit."[29]

> Christ is the *all absorbing* doctrine of truth of the Scriptures. All other truths end in or emanate from Him. He is the Truth. And inspired writers are so imbued with this truth that they refer all preaching and prophesying found in the Bible to Christ . . . So that the doctrine of not a part but of the whole Bible is the doctrine of Christ.[30]

But the Christocentricity of Smith's theology was not without its inseparable anthropological reference. For it was not Christ in creation, or in providence, or in incarnation, or in suffering, or in regal honor or in judgment alone, but *Christ indwelling His people* that Smith found His supreme glory manifested. *"Christ in you,* the hope of glory," whether in time or in eternity, was to him the crowning glory of the gospel.[31]

In thus understanding the Christ of the Scriptures Smith the Methodist was one with his older contemporary, the noted Baptist theologian, Augustus Hopkins Strong, who, addressing some theological students, said: ". . . I believe that the doctrine of union with Christ is the central truth of all theology and of all religion."[32]

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[28] Smith, "The Inspiration and Interpretation of the Scripture," *Heart and Life,* December 1919, pp. 13, 14, 16.

[29] Smith, "Education! Inspiration! Illumination!" *Heart and Life,* May 1925, pp. 8, 9.

[30] Smith, "Cardinal Doctrines of the Bible," *Heart and Life,* March 1921, pp. 6f.

[31] Smith, *Pauline Perfection,* pp. 106, 107; Smith, "What Christ Plans For His Own," *God's Revivalist,* November 2, 1933, pp. 4, 13.

[32] Augustus Hopkins Strong, *One Hundred Chapel Talks to Theological Students,* p. 24.

Present Day Trends In Theology

HAROLD PAUL SLOAN

War is unavoidably an energizing experience. If we rise to its challenge we are stimulated, if we surrender before it we are overwhelmed. When men rise to the challenge of war all their contemporary ideas are accelerated. So the First World War accelerated the trend toward naturalism. Science came to conceive itself as the one sufficient approach to truth; and the Protestant Church adjusting itself to this idea drifted into Modernism. This development greatly weakened Protestantism and produced that faltering attitude that has become familiar.

The beginning of a reaction against this development had already set in before naturalism had born its finished fruitage—communism, facism, naziism and humanism. Professor Karl Barth discovered the shallowness and complete inadequacy of the naturalistic point of view and began the reaction toward a more robust Christian philosophy. Organized around Barth and his less radically Calvinistic colleague, Emil Brunner, there developed the neoothodoxy of the late twenties and early thirties.

This incipient theological movement was again stimulated by the development of another major war, and also by a sharp reaction of science against the unfounded determinism of the preceding decades. Thus, so distinguished a scientist as Sir Arthur Eddington pointed out that scientific determinism was completely without scientific foundation. It was no more grounded in facts than was the ancient proverb that the moon is made of green cheese. Other scientists also joined in the protest, such men as James Jeans, Arthur Compton, and Robert Millikan.

A third force that promoted this same reaction was the terrific brutality developed in Nazi Germany and Communist Russia. Men were forced to recognize that human nature could easily become demonic, consequently the doctrine of depravity which had been so offensive to "Modernist" theologians (those influenced by naturalism) was rediscovered as an inescapable fact of life.

Then in the middle 'thirties men in great numbers began to change their minds. The *Christian Century* ran a series of thirty-

seven or so articles on "How I have changed my mind in the last decade." Ten years later a ranking scientist, LeComte DuNouy, brought out a brouchure, setting forth the opinions of some brought out a brochure, setting forth the opinions of some seventeen prominent scientists, practically all of whom joined in the general repudiation of the crude determinism of the preceding decades.

This brings us to the threshold of the contemporary period and to the task of surveying in part its intellectual trend. First of all we note a growing appreciation of the old idea of a two-story world — earth and heaven. About fifteen years ago Dr. Hopwood of Scotland brought out his book, *And The Other Mary.* This volume told the story of a Scotch girl's experience of revelation in the very moment of death and it told it very convincingly. Other volumes recognizing the same interaction between heaven and earth are: Dr. Price's work, *The Story of Patience Worth;* Dr. Alson Smith's work, *Religion and the New Psychology;* Dr. J. B. Rhine's various volumes setting forth the scientific certainty of telepathic and clairvoyant powers; Dr. Sherwood Eddy's *Making of Men;* and Mr. Thomas Sugrue's *There is a River;* which details the life story of the notable Clairvoyant, Mr. Cayce of St. Louis.

It is interesting to note that numbers of contemporary thinkers are now frankly affirming the reality of the demonic. Professor Edwin Lewis, formerly of Drew, now of Temple University in Philadelphia, illustrates this new trend.

In the field of New Testament there is a growing recognition of its historical dependability. Professor Filson of McCormick developes this point of view in his *Origin of the Gospel;* as also does Professor E. F. Scott formerly of Union, New York, in his *Validity of the Gospels.* Archbishop William Temple, in his *Readings in St. John's Gospel,* takes the position that St. John is the responsible mind behind that important writing, and he looks upon its records as thoroughly dependable. James Moffatt in his *Jesus Christ the Same* puts the Fourth Gospel in the last decade of the first century, just where tradition has always put it; and Professor John Scott, formerly head of the Department of Greek at Northwestern University, classifies Jesus of Nazareth as one whose life and work are more certainly known than are the records of Tiberius Caesar, under whose emperorship He was crucified.

Again T. A. Kantonen of Hamma Divinity Schol in Ohio in his *Resurgence of the Gospel* notes how fully it is coming back, and Arnold S. Nash, editor of *Protestant Thought in the Twentieth Century,* points out that the neo-orthodoxy is nothing less than a rising intellectual tide. In this volume even the Graf-Wellhausen school of criticism is challenged. The most widely recognized authority in semitic studies, Professor W. L. Albright, is quoted to the effect that the Pentateuch is in great part Mosaic in its origin (page 33).

As might be expected there is also a reaction toward Nicean Christology. James Moffatt, John Scott, Karl Adam, Karl Heim, C. F. Lewis, Edwin Lewis, Emil Brunner, John S. Whale, A. Richardson are among the scholars who are expressing this trend. Strikingly enough Professor Frederick Loofs, in his *What is the Truth about Jesus,* as long ago as 1911 pointed out the intellectual bankruptcy of German Jesus-criticism.

Karl Barth, the real founder of the Neo-orthodox movement, is doubtless too sensitive to German Jesus-criticism to ground his theology in the Saviour's historic figure, but he substitutes the Christ of faith for Criticism's Jesus of History and holds that the former is the one hope of the world. Barth's conceptions that God is the wholly Other, and that natural man has no possible approach to Him except by supernatural divine revelation, makes this great thinker necessarily a high Calvinist. For this reason Barth has no room in his thinking for man's own creative purposing; and so no necessity that the facts of the Gospel should be convincing to man's reason. Consequently he finds it easy to adjust himself to the conclusions of negative criticism. He does not need to magnify the commanding appeal of the Jesus of history to man's aspiring soul, finding everything that is necessary for salvation in the Christ of faith, who is supernaturally made known to the elect by revelation. This whole attitude, it seems to me, is an apologetic natural enough to Barth on account of the dominance of destructive criticism in Germany. It is not, however, necessary to the neo-orthodox position.

The rise of political Communism and Naziism in Europe and the enormous brutalities they have practised have completely unfounded the humanistic optimism of the first three decades of the twentieth century. The natural goodness of man is no longer con-

vincing. Instead there is now a sharp reaction against this shallow opinion. Neo-orthodoxy may be at times overly pessimistic, but the Saviour Himself did say that salvation was completely impossible at the human level, and that only God Himself had the resource which could produce holiness and blessedness in the creature. Contemporary theological thinking is increasingly recognizing this. Professor Reinhold Niebuhr has developed it in his *Nature and Destiny of Man* and also in his *Faith and History.*

There is also a growing recognition that Christian faith and human freedom are closely related values. A most distinguished work developing this truth objectively is Dr. Bready's *England before and after Wesley.* Bready is heavily dependent in this magnificent work on Sidney's three volume study of *England in the 18th Century.* Bready's conclusions are fully warranted by Sidney's earlier studies. Stamp's *Christianity and Economics* and his *Motive and Method of a Christian Order* both recognize the same dependance of civilization upon faith. Ellwood's *The World's Need of Christ* does the same. Arnold Toynbee's *Civilization on Trial,* in which he developes the practical conclusions of his larger work, states the same position. Strikingly enough DeTocville in his *Democracy in America* (written in the fore part of the nineteenth century) developes the same conclusion. The social fruitage of Christianity, so commandingly presented in the *Gesta Christi* and other earlier works, is thus powerfully reaffirmed by many writers. Latourette's *Anno Domini* presents these same truths most impressively.

The authority of Christian experience, as itself a scientifically valid basis of truth, is receiving wide contemporary recognition. John Baillie clearly affirms it in *Our Knowledge of God,* as also does Albert Knudsen in *The Validity of Christian Experience.* President Smuts, speaking as President of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, in his presidential address, makes the thrilling statement that "the world consists of not only electrons and radiation, but of souls and aspiration. Beauty and holiness are as much aspects of nature as energy and entropy." In harmony with these new recognitions it is interesting to observe that Professor J. B. Rhine of Duke is now completely forthright in his statement that the human soul is a force distinct from man's physical body. He affirms this now as a demonstrated fact of science.

One of the new developments of the twentieth century is a very much richer appreciation of history. History today is seen as an enduring value, something that remains and exercises a commanding influence. Reinhold Niebuhr develops this idea in his *Faith and History* and a number of other authors are recognizing similarly the great significance of historic truth. I might mention Dodd's *History and the Gospel;* Jessup's *Nature, History and God;* Trueblood's *The Predicament of Modern Man;* and *Signs of Hope.*

This outline of trends and authors is necessarily eketchy and incomplete, since the working pastor, with the demands of a large parish upon him, cannot possibly give the time to reading that is the business of the theological professor. It is, however, sufficiently broad to give a certain enlarged confidence to earnest men. My experience in living through the confused era which now lies behind us is that the speculative intellect is completely unreliable. It does not matter whether the particular writer be a scientist, a philosopher or a theologian, all speculative thinking should be received hesitantly. The fact is the Christian man can never be exclusively speculative; he must always do his thinking as one who is actually living a moral and aspiring life. To cut one's thinking loose from one's morality and aspiration is to leave it in a vacuum. Kirkegaard's "existentialism" is the essential point of view of all Christian thinkers. We must think as moral men, aspiring men, humble men, and so believing men. Proud self-sufficiency is necessarily a corrupting force. It blinds men to truth and makes ineffective all intellectual processes. LeComte DeNouy was saying something different from this, but none the less something to the same effect, when he denounced naturalistic speculations concerning the origin of the universe as both irresponsible and completely impossible. It has become increasingly clear to me, across the years, that every man's thinking rests down upon his fundamental choice in moral philosophy. There is no such thing as completely objective thinking. The naturalist has chosen a particular point of view and his entire speculation is as much the result of his basic choice of a non-moral philosophy as the theist's is of his basic choice of faith in God. Faith is the great word, and every man must have a faith. The supreme ministry of the hour is an affirmative declaration of the great Christian truths grounded upon the believer's moral choice of faith in Jesus Christ.

The Disciplines of the Wesleyan Way

Mary Alice Tenney

The reformers of the 16th century gave to their followers a catechism, or confession of faith, later to be expanded, in one case, into "Institutes." Pietism, a century later, stressed not doctrine but holy living. Methodism in the 18th century elaborated this, after the fashion of Jeremy Taylor, so that followers of Wesley were given a "Discipline." With them the point of greatest concern was not the pattern of belief but the implementation of creed in a pattern of living.

Perfect love is not static, does not operate in a vacuum, nor is it primarily a religious experience. It is essentially a way of behaving. The perfection commanded by Christ, when he said, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect," postulates a way of life in which love and impartiality flow out toward all men, whether good or bad. Perfect love, although an inner principle, finds expression at every point at which a man touches life.

This aspect has not always been kept to the fore by teachers of Perfection, particularly by those who have leaned toward mysticism. Wesley's early and unhappy experiences with mysticism aided him in preserving an interdependence of character and conduct and a balance between inward and outward religion.

He liked to parallel his own situation with that of Paul, who before conversion had attempted slavishly to obey a ponderous code of 613 laws, and yet after his liberation on the Damascus road had not abandoned Mosaic law, but had loved it the more and submitted to its demands even more happily because it had been the means of bringing him to Christ.

Wesley further valued the law because after bringing us to Christ it "keeps us with Christ. The law says, 'Thou shalt not kill'; and hereby (as our Lord teaches), forbids not only outward acts, but every unkind word or thought. Now," says Wesley, "the more I look into this perfect law, the more I feel how far I come short of it: and the more I feel this, the more I feel my need of his

blood to atone for all my sin, and of his Spirit to purify my heart, and make me 'perfect and entire, lacking nothing.' "[1] Only so does the convert come to sense his need for perfect love.

Throughout the Christian life there is, therefore, continuing dependence upon the law. "....on the one hand, the height and depth of the law constrain me to fly to the love of God in Christ; on the other, the love of God in Christ endears the law to me.... seeing I know every part of it is a gracious promise which my Lord will fulfil in its season."[2]

Without the law neither faith nor perfect love can be attained. In Wesley's case, for example, the exacting standards of conduct set up by Kempis, Taylor, and Law had first convinced him of the unique and lofty quality of Christian morality and then had driven him after utter despair of human endeavor to faith in the atonement.

In another respect, also, Wesley found his course paralleling that of St. Paul's. The great apostle, convinced of Christ's fulfillment of all contained in the law, had had to apply Christ's principles to problems of conduct that arose in the early church. Likewise, Wesley, made aware through his reading in church history of the continuity of the Christian tradition, had to translate the principles he had rediscovered into terms of practice for the eighteenth century.

Law had given him many of his ideas concerning Christian conduct; but it is one thing for a mystic like Law to outline in his quiet study the high standards of Christian Perfection, and quite another for an evangelist to hold these same standards unflinchingly before audiences of semi-pagans and interpret them with sufficient clarity and urgency to call forth truly Christian behavior. This was Wesley's task, and without question he succeeded in it to a phenomenal degree. An abundance of documents from early Methodist writers testify to the beauty of life that resulted when love found expression in action.

How had this been accomplished? Not alone through *the preaching* of "the full ideal." Not simply through the response of individuals to this preaching. Very early in the revival Wesley dis-

[1] *Sermons,* II, 55.
[2] *Loc. cit.*
[3] *Works,* VII, 260.

covered to his dismay the universal human tendency toward antinomianism, that is, the proneness of weak human beings, after their first experience of saving grace, to rest in a static legal fiction that divorces works from faith. He did not have to cope long with new converts who loudly professed on Sunday morning to a state of grace, despite their reversion on Saturday night to drunken sprees, before he saw the necessity for positive specification of what constitutes Christian practice.

Laws and rules that could be definitely observed had to make principles explicit to men and women void of moral insight. Love continued to be the core of his message, but the *modus operandi* of love in life situations had to be made plain. Even those who claimed the high experience of Christian Perfection were sometimes found resting in mere profession. Wesley came to suspect all testimony to religious experience that was not directly accompanied by positive Christian action. He had no patience with the religious sentimentalist.

The foundation for a code of Christian conduct he laid in unhesitating acceptance of eternal values as the only reality. His faith in the spiritual capacities of men and women previously sunk in gross materialism is amazing. In such sermons as "Walking by Sight and Faith," he expects an immediate comprehension of supersensous reality, and declares that Christians "regulate all their judgments concerning good and evil, not with reference to visible and temporal things, but to things invisible and eternal. They think visible things to be of small value, because they pass away.... but, on the contrary, they account invisible things to be of high value, because they will never pass away."[3]

Upon this basis they judge all things to "be good or evil, as they promote or hinder their welfare, not in time, but in eternity.. They regulate all their tempers and passions, all their desires, joys, and fears, by this standard. They regulate all their thoughts, and designs, all their words and actions, so as to prepare them for that invisible and eternal world to which they are shortly going."[4]

Some test cases make this truth clear. He asks, "Which do you judge best—that your son should be a pious cobbler, or a profane lord? Which appears to you most eligible—that your daughter should be a child of God, and walk on foot, or a child

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 261.

of the devil, and ride in a coach-and-six?" Rejecting all materialistic values, he sternly asserts that one who sets his affection upon earthly things is "as surely in the way of destruction, as a thief or a common drunkard."[6]

This, he adds, "is religion, and this alone....It is not *morality;* excellent as that is, when it is built on a right foundation, loving faith; but when otherwise, it is of no value in the sight of God....Religion is no less than living in eternity and walking in eternity and hereby walking in the love of God and man . . ."[6] The utter renunciation of all materialistic aims in a life of perfect love is here made plain.

Life in eternity calls for a rejection of the old scale of values. To the Christian the love of God is the only total good; all other goods are partial and secondary, and their value depends entirely upon the contribution they can make to a life of love. The Christian sees the "real evil of apparent good," the danger of resting even in such legitimate satisfactions as delight in the beautiful, honor from one's fellows, success in one's vocation.

We are all materialistic, according to Wesley—disbelievers in the eternal—to so great a degree, "that it requires no less than almighty power to counteract that tendency to dissipation which is in every human spirit, and restore the capacity of attending to God, and fixing itself on him."[7] Our indifference to eternal things may come simply from the "hurry of business," or "seeking honour or preferment." Rivalry with God may be set up merely by love of adornment, or "fondness for diversions" or "any trifle under the sun."[8]

"The vulgar," says Wesley, "confine the character of dissipation to those attached to women, gaming, drinking, to dancing, balls, races, fox-hunting, but it applies to anyone who forgets God by attention to any worldly employment." The gratification of the senses, for instance, may become a major source of happiness, not only in "gross, open intemperance," but often in a "genteel sensuality," that is to be found among the poor as well as among the rich.[9]

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[6] *Loc. cit.*
[6] *Ibid.,* p. 263.
[7] *Works,* VI, 445.
[8] *Ibid.,* p. 448.
[9] *Loc. cit.*

The satisfaction of the imagination in "objects grand, beautiful or uncommon," especially in dress, furniture and amusements, may supersede the happiness found in God.[10] Desire for the honor of men, which is called by great men "thirst for glory" and by ordinary men "taking care of our reputation," in either instance is an expression of the love of the world and engenders pride and conflicts with devotion to God.[11]

We shall find that the evil in most of the matters denounced by the early Methodists lay as much in their refusal to remain subordinated to the supreme good as in their inherent sinfulness. The drama is a striking example of this in its continual tendency to drift away from high spiritual purpose and moral control. Perry remarks that all aesthetic pleasures, although higher than physical delights, may be "proportionately more dangerous to true piety," for they set up a more subtle claim upon the cultivated mind and gradually dull it to the love of God.[12]

The proper attitude to take toward all legitimate interests is that of stewardship. Wesley believed that "we have no right to dispose of anything we have, but according to His will, seeing we are not proprietors of any of these things; they are all, as our Lord speaks....*belonging to another person*; nor is anything properly *our own* . . . We shall not receive . . . *our own things,* till we come to our own country. Eternal things only are our own: with all these temporal things we are barely entrusted by another, the Disposer and Lord of all."[13]

This principle of stewardship applies to much more than money. Wesley enumerates the human faculties of understanding, imagination, memory, will, affection and emotion, as well as the functions of the senses. Other endowments to be used for eternal ends are personality, strength, health, education and influence over

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[10] *Works,* VI, 438-40. Speaking of those things that appeal to the imagination, Wesley says: "The generality of men, and more particularly men of sense and learning, are so far from suspecting that there is, or can be, the least harm in them, that they seriously believe it is matter of great praise to *give ourselves wholly to them.*"

[11] *Ibid.,* p. 441.

[12] R. B. Perry, *Puritanism and Democracy,* p. 236. Perry remarks that those who "confuse piety with what they call 'the beauty of the service,' . . . testify to the power of this seduction, especially over more cultivated minds."

[13] *Sermons,* II, 464.

others.[14] It follows, then, that no action or use of time is indifferent. All have significance in a life of stewardship.

One must be ready at the end to give an inclusive accounting: "Didst thou use thy food, not so as to seek or place thy happiness therein, but so to preserve thy body in health....a fit instrument of thy soul? Didst thou use thy apparel, not to nourish pride or vanity, much less to tempt others to sin, but conveniently and decently to defend thyself from injuries of the weather? Didst thou prepare and use thy house, and all other conveniences, with a single eye to my glory? in every point seeking not thy own honour, but mine....?"[15]

If such questions seem too exacting, too much concerned with minutiae, let us remind ourselves of the high goal set by Wesley. Perry says of Puritanism that it requires "a will that is never wholly committed to any subordinate enterprise, or wholly absorbed by any constituent part of life....It implies a centralized and unified control which will bring the whole course of man's actions, feeling, and thoughts into accord with his moral judgment or spiritual faith."[16] If this was true of seventeenth century Puritanism, the subject of Perry's investigation, it was even more characteristic of a movement which claimed Perfect Love as its governing principle.

Methodism was the first movement to bring the doctrine of Perfection and the disciplines for its attainment out of the monastic environment and present it as the norm for all Christians. The Reformation had declared that the full Christian life can be lived in any of the ordinary callings. However, neither Calvin nor Luther worked out the full implications of this revolutionary view of the common life.[18] Law saw these implications and Wesley preached them to the masses.

They lie at the base of all his advices to Methodists, and were never more emphatically stated than in his article on the "Character of a Methodist," of whom he says, "In all his employments of every kind, he not only aims at this (the glory of God)....but actually attains it. His business and refreshments, as well as his

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[14] *Ibid.*, pp. 464-7.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 476.

[16] Perry, *op. cit.*, p. 253.

[17] See Flew, *The Idea of Perfection in Christian Theology*, p. 250. *et seq.*

prayers, all serve this great end. Whether he sit in his house or walk by the way, whether he lie down or rise up, he is promoting, in all he speaks or does, the one business of his life; whether he put on his apparel, or labour, or eat and drink, or divert himself from too wasting labour, it all tends to advance the glory of God, by peace and good-will among men. His one invariable rule is this, 'Whatsoever ye do, in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus'. . . ."[18]

What criterion, then, should govern our desire for the natural goods, such as food, clothing, or work? Wesley had early accepted Law's principle of temperance in the satisfaction of all natural desires. He believed that, just as in eating and drinking the rule is strict temperance, so "we may *dress,* we may buy and sell, may *labour,* we may provide for ourselves and our Families" as nature demands. But "all Variation from this Rule, is like Gluttony and Intemperance, and fills our Souls with. . . . Tempers. . . . contrary to the Spirit of Christ . . ."[19]

Wesley condemns those who vary from this rule upon the pretext of accomplishing more good by increased natural goods. Such persons practice "worldly prudence," which declares as its "grand maxim": "The more power, the more money, the more learning, and the more reputation a man has, the more good he will do." But it may be observed that "Whenever a Christian, pursuing the noblest ends, forms his behaviour by these maxims, he will infallibly. . . . use more or less of conformity to the world, if not in sin, yet in doing some things that are. . . . not good to him; and perhaps at length using guile or disguise, simulation or dissimulation."[20] Christian prudence forms its judgments from the Word of God, not from compromise with the standards set by men.

This is the lofty ideal for the use of natural goods which the preaching of Perfect Love placed before the early Methodists. If the law of love places such severe controls upon legitimate interests, certainly any matter of conduct that contains in it positive elements of evil will come in for condemnation. Whatever deteriorates personality or harms society can never be harmonized with love of man.

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[18] *Works,* VIII. 345.

[19] Law, *Works,* III, p. 76.

[20] *Letters,* IV, 63.

This principle was applied not only to the gross sins but to the so-called lesser sins as well: not only to drunkenness, sexual laxity, licentiousness and brutality in amusements, but also to covetousness, jealousy, anger, evil-speaking, vanity and worldly anxiety. Each age has its own peculiar sins, great and small. Methodism, because of its deep moral sensitivity, its high estimate of the value and potentialities of human personality, and its acceptance of a wholly Christian scale of values, recognized the sins of its age and made no allowance for them in its way of life.

Many of the evils denounced by Wesley had already been specified by seventeenth century Puritanism. This does not mean that he unthinkingly accepted traditional views. It means rather that there still persisted in the eighteenth century a lack of moral control in the same areas of conduct; for example, in dancing, in the theatre, in the use of spiritous liquors. Wesley recognized, as had Fox and Baxter and Law, the deterioration of personality that accompanied the free expression of impulse in these directions and likewise sought for regulation.

So free did Wesley believe himself from any traditional bias that he looked upon Methodism as something new in the eighteenth century, something called forth by the moral and spiritual needs of the time and not simply a revival of Puritanism or Moravianism.[21] There is indeed ground for accepting this point of view when it is remembered that the Methodist Societies were an organic development within the Church of England, and the Rules of the Societies simply means improvised by Wesley for the restoration of the national church to the Christian Way. If puritanism be defined in the generic sense, not as a single historic episode in the seventeenth century, but as the recurrent revival of Christianity in its simplicity, then it will be seen that the pattern of conduct evolved by Methodism, dealing drastically, as it did, with all the symptoms of moral weakness in its age, was bound to have some likeness to all conduct-patterns adopted by such revivals. The insubordinated human will remains the same throughout the centuries, manifesting its enmity to God and good in much the same manner; hence, every revival of Christianity brings with it similar insights into universal evils and opposition to them.[22]

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[21] Umphrey Lee, *John Wesley and Modern Religion*, p. 201.

[22] See Perry, *op. cit.*, p. 266.

No such conduct pattern is ever popular. It is branded as narrow-minded and fanatical. Perry, analyzing this inevitable accompaniment of puritanism, remarks that unswerving adherence to belief will always seem fanaticism to more balanced minds, just as did the faith of the early Christians to the cultivated pagans of that day. The Puritan, in his "ruthless subordination of every lesser consideration to the one thing needful" is single-minded, and single-mindedness is always likely to seem narrow-mindedness.[23]

Wesley in his advices to Methodists warned them of this inevitable reaction to their way of life. They would give offence to all classes: to bigots by laying so little stress on opinions, to men of form by insisting on the inwardness of religion, to secular moralists by declaring the necessity of faith, to humanists by talk of inspiration and guidance of the Holy Ghost, to open sinners by reproof and separation from their company. It will be said of them, "you are grown so precise and singular, so monstrously strict, beyond all sense and reason, that you scruple so many harmless things, and fancy you are obliged to do so many others which you need not."[24]

The *Rules of the Society of the people called Methodists* seemed in 1743,[25] when they were first published, the very epitome of narrow-mindedness, just as they do today, when cultural influences for a century have carried us farther and farther away from the single-mindedness and simplicity of early Methodism. Wesley is now often condemned as a legalist attempting to cramp the religion of love within a narrow set of regulations.

But before we accept this indictment let us try to place ourselves imaginatively in his situation when in 1743 he was faced with the necessity of making more explicit for a large group of near pagans the meaning of the gospel of Perfect Love. It was in Newcastle that the *Rules* were composed. Nine months had elapsed since his first meetings there, during which time hundreds had responded to the call to a life of Christian Perfection. In the interval the society had lost 149 members. About 800 remained.

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[23] *Loc. cit.*

[24] *Works,* VIII, 354.

[25] Simon says that the dismissals showed Wesley the necessity for an explicit statement of a conduct pattern "in accordance with the gospel." John S. Simon, *John Wesley and the Methodist Societies* (London: Epworth Press, 1921), p. 99.

Of the 149 departures seventy-six had been voluntary, produced mostly by persecution. The remainder had been due to expulsion, upon what appear to be quite legitimate grounds, in accordance with Wesley's clear teaching on conduct. The charges listed are: swearing, sabbath breaking, drunkenness, selling spirituous liquors, quarreling, wife-beating, wilful lying, railing, laziness, and lightness and carelessness.

It was imperative that some precise regulations be formulated for the 800 members who remained. Otherwise disintegration would continue. Those who had gone constituted the "hysterical fringe" of the revival, the seekers for emotional experiences rather than for the righteousness that is in Christ. Wesley by this time had come to recognize this peripheral group, common to all great revivals, whose awakening is not moral, and who are, therefore, unprepared for the stern challenge of Christianity. They are those described by Christ as the stony and thorny places, where seed cannot grow. But the good ground that remained could be made to bring forth fruit if properly cultivated. The *Rules* and the organization into classes were the means devised for nurturing the seed.

As we have noted previously, Wesley's first conversion was ethical and determined the ethical emphasis of his message.[27] Like Paul, he recognized the full significance of the negative demands made by the law and knew that love not only fulfills these but exceeds them in intensity because of Christ's new interpretation of inner principles. It was in this spirit that the *Rules* were written, the same spirit that animated Paul when he applied the principles enunciated by Christ to specific situations and problems faced by the first century church.

It must be noted, also, that Wesley as well as Paul was prescribing for those who wished to be "whole Christians," those who were responsive to all the implications of the Christian ethic and proposed by the power of God to live the life of Christian Perfection. The Methodist, as Wesley envisioned him, was a Christian in fact as well as in name. "He is inwardly and outwardly conformed to the will of God, as revealed in the written word. He thinks, speaks, and lives, according to the method laid down in the revelation of Jesus Christ. His soul is renewed after the image

[26] Luke Tyerman, *Life and Times of the Rev. John Wesley*, I, 403.

[27] See Chapter V, p. 80.

of God, in righteousness and in all true holiness, and having the mind that was in Christ, he so walks as Christ also walked. . . ."[28]

In formulating the *General Rules* Wesley looked first of all to the life of Christ. Here was the Way in its purity, and the Methodist was to ask in every situation, What would Christ do here? This required that one be always spiritually alert, flexible, forever open to new light. The *General Rules* formed only a skeletal outline of problems that might arise; each follower was to seek first the "mind that was in Christ." Wesley urged, ". . . .in the name of God, be open to conviction. Whatever prejudices you have contracted from education, custom, or example, divest yourselves of them, as far as possible. Be willing to receive light either from God or man; do not shut your eyes against it."[29]

The whole Bible was to be consulted and its precepts accepted without question. ". . . .the Christian rule of right and wrong is the Word of God, the writings of the Old and New Testament; all that the prophets and 'holy men of old' wrote 'as they were moved by the Holy Ghost'. . . ." The Christian "esteems nothing good, but what is here enjoined, either directly or by plain consequence; he accounts nothing evil but what is here forbidden, either in terms, or by undeniable inference." On the other hand, "whatever the Scripture neither forbids nor enjoins, either directly or by plain consequence, he (the Christian) believes to be of an indifferent nature; to be in itself neither good nor evil; this being the whole and sole outward rule whereby his conscience is to be directed in all things."[30]

It is very evident from many passages that Wesley proposed to unite in a way never attempted before religious experience at its highest and Christian practice at its best. As he surveyed the practices of the various religious groups of his day, Wesley felt that none of them had acted fully upon this principle. He said: "When we look into the Bible with any attention, and then look round into the world, to see who believes and who lives according to this book; we may easily discern that the system of practice, as well as the system of truth, there delivered, is torn in pieces, and scattered abroad like the members of Absyrtus. Every de-

[28] *Works,* VIII, 346.
[29] *Works,* XI, 467.
[30] *Sermons,* I, 226.

nomination of Christians retains some part either of Christian truth or practice; these hold fast one part, and those another, as their fathers did before them."[31]

This may be a debatable indictment, but we must remember that Wesley was looking for "whole Christianity" in practice just as he had looked for it in doctrine and experience. Accordingly he concluded that "the duty....of those who desire to follow the whole work of God" is "to 'gather up' all these 'fragments' that, if possible, 'nothing be lost'; with all diligence to follow all those we see about us, so far as they follow the Bible; and to join together in one scheme of truth and practice what almost all the world put asunder."[32]

This statement is of great significance, because of the information which it gives: first, concerning the sources of the *General Rules,* and secondly, concerning the claim made by Wesley to the uniqueness of the Methodist movement. While the Bible was his original source, and the practices of the early church, as recorded by the historians, furnished a helpful commentary upon the Biblical directions, Wesley drew also upon practices among contemporary religious groups. For example, the influence of the Quakers, the Independents and the Moravians upon such matters as personal adornment, diversions, and use of money were all acknowledged by him.

It has been generally held that the major influence came from Anglican authorities upon the primitive church, such as Cave and Fleury.[33] While it is true that they did shape his early thinking, the statement just quoted as well as others that might be given indicate a wide eclecticism in his treatment of the problems of Christian behavior. The synthesis between the Catholic theory of Christian Perfection and the Protestant doctrine of Justification by Faith which Wesley is said to have formulated in the realm of doctrine is paralleled by a far-reaching synthesis in the realm of Christian practice. He sought to bring together in the *General Rules* whatever in the practices of early Christians or contemporary believers seemed to conform to Biblical standards.

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[31] *Works,* XI, 466.

[32] *Loc. cit.*

[33] Cave is the source given by Simon, *op. cit.,* pp. 105 *et seq.* Lee, *op. cit.,* pp. 64, 65 adds Fleury and the *Apostolic Constitutions.*

This is the reason for Wesley's claim that Methodism was something new. Within the State Church groups had voluntarily come together who were so concerned about "whole Christianity" that they were willing to take upon themselves *all* the disciplines that historical Christianity had found helpful. They saw the interdependence of character and conduct more clearly than did their fellows in the State Church. Their uniqueness in religious experience led inevitably to uniqueness in practice.

The extent of these disciplines and the seriousness with which they were adopted is manifest in Wesley's "Advice to the People called Methodists," 1745, when he said to them: "Your strictness of life, taking the whole of it together, may likewise be accounted new. I mean, your making it a rule, to abstain from fashionable diversions....; your plainness of dress; your manner of dealing in trade; your exactness in observing the Lord's day; your scrupulosity as to things that have not paid custom; your total abstinence from spirituous liquors (unless in cases of necessity); your rule, 'not to mention the fault of an absent person,'....may justly be termed new."[34]

Wesley believed that these practices occasioned by Methodist emphasis upon perfect love set his followers apart from all eighteenth century religious groups. He said that although some groups were "scrupulous in some of these things" and others were "strict with regard to other particulars," yet he did not find "any other body of people who insist on all these rules together." Methodists might, therefore, be considered a "new people" with respect to their "name, principles, and practice."[35]

The significance of Methodism, Wesley believed, lay in its comprehensive inclusion of the elements which have characterized Christianity, whenever it has returned to its fundamental doctrines, principles and practices. It had discovered what is common to Christianity whenever and wherever it has appeared in its simplicity. In spite of all the seeming diversity in historic Christianity, at the core is uniformity, for the dictates of love remain much the same from age to age.

For this reason he believed the rules would carry their own verification and appeal to every man's judgment. He confidently

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[34] *Works*, VIII, 354.

[35] *Loc. cit.*

declared their universal acceptability, saying, "all these we know His Spirit writes on every truly awakened heart." This seems an amazing assumption; yet Harnack has pointed out that Protestantism reckons upon the Gospel being something so simple, so divine, and therefore so truly human, as to be most certain of being understood when it is "left entirely free," and also as to produce essentially the same experiences and convictions in individual souls. Wesley had reached this conclusion after years of thought upon the ethical demands of Scriptural Christianity. Under the influence of the Evangelical Movement his conclusion was accepted in the main by thousands of Christians within and without the Church of England and on both sides of the Atlantic during the nineteenth century.

To the early Methodists the *Rules* were entirely acceptable. They were immediately adopted by the Manchester Society. We may assume that the withdrawals and expulsions had rid the Society of all those who were not seeking perfect love. Those who remained were glad to submit to rigid disciplines, for they agreed with Wesley that "these outward signs" are the consequences of love of God, which precludes anything that will interfere with right tempers, communion with God, or dedication to His will; and also anything that interferes with love of the neighbor and devotion to his good.

The *Rules* were for them an objectification of principles which had already been filled with meaning by their experiences in their search for God. The *Rules* elucidated the way of life which they wished to adopt. They were not a super-imposed code of laws; they simply charted the way of perfect love.

If one understands the spirit in which the *Rules* were written and adopted, one can also understand the spirit which prompted expulsion of those who refused to be governed by the *Rules*. Such persons had not caught the full implications of the Methodist message; they were still too close to the worldiness of the great mass of Anglicans who rested in opinions, church attendance, assent to creed or other false assurances condemned by Wesley. Their way was not the Wesleyan way and their continuance in the movement would soon obscure its high goal and weaken its power.

Wesley attributed the inefficacy of current Christianity to this very lack of discipline in the Church. He agreed with the belief held by the primitive Church that "none could be real Chris-

tians, without the help of discipline."[36] The fact that no such discipline now existed "in any part of England" seemed to him to account for the scarcity of English Christians.

He was very severe with those clergymen who accused him of destroying the order of the Church, replying that if by order was meant "true Christian discipline, whereby all the living members of Christ are knit together in one, and all that are putrid and dead immediately cut off from the body" he would agree to reverence it. "But," he asked, "where is it to be found?....Your parishioners are a rope of sand....few (if any) of them are alive to God; so they have no connexion with each other, unless such as might be among Turks or heathens." The clergy had neither the power nor the courage "to cut off from that body, were it alive, the dead and putrid members."[37] They dared not repel the greatest men in their parishes from the communion table, even though they might be drunkards."[38]

Wesley's view of the dependence of Christianity upon discipline for its spread and likewise his severity in expelling from the societies all those who did not obey the *Rules* indicate plainly the original nature of Methodist Societies. They were very definitely a "gathered church," who had chosen "the more excellent way." They did not impose their conduct pattern upon those who did not know their principles. But, for themselves, they were convinced that a life of complete dedication to God required acceptance of all the disciplines proposed by Wesley.[39] They agreed with him, likewise, that the moral state of the world would not be greatly bettered until "the more excellent way" was understood and generally followed; hence, while avoiding censoriousness, they were continuously evangelistic.

It was early found that "many ill consequences" came from continuing those in the Societies who had given way to "sins which had long easily beset them. It was dangerous to others; inasmuch as all sin is of an infectious nature." The scandal which it brought "caused the truth to be evil spoken of."[40]

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[36] *Works*, VII, 285.
[37] *Works*, VIII, 255.
[38] *Ibid.*, p. 175.
[39] See Wesley's sermon on the "More Excellent Way," *Works*, VII, 29-36,
[40] *Ibid.*, p. 252.

Wesley's administration of "true Christian discipline" was, therefore, firmly and fearlessly carried out. He advised one of his preachers facing the problem of smuggling among his members, "Begin in the name of God and go through with the work. If only six will promise you to sin no more, leave only six in the Society. But my belief is an hundred and fifty are now clear of blame; and if you are steady, an hundred will amend."[41]

Direct and sympathetic dealing with the offender always preceded expulsion. In the early days of the Societies Wesley himself met every member at least once in three months. He knew "not only their names, but their outward and inward states, their difficulties and dangers." "How otherwise," he asked clergymen who made no pretense to pastoral work, "can I know either how to guide them aright, or to commend them to God in prayer?"[42]

As the revival spread, class-meetings were organized and served the purpose of both better counseling and closer discipline. The prospective member was first placed in a class for a quarter and then given a ticket of admission if he had proven himself. The class-leader kept in weekly contact with the members of his class and once a quarter Wesley or one of his preachers examined all members and renewed the tickets of those who had been faithful. Those who had not been were admonished and again put upon probation. This was done in the most quiet and inoffensive manner, and very often the unruly member finally became a faithful Methodist. Only in cases where the offence was great was any announcement of dismissal made. Wesley felt that the plan was simple, rational and scriptural.[43]

He said also that this plan was unusual, that the exclusion of "the disorderly, without any respect of persons" was a method used by few religious communities. He felt that Presbyterians, Baptists, Independents and Friends had close kinship with Methodism in their insistence that Christian principles be translated into action; but he believed that they had all grown lax in enforcement of their position.

One of his principle objections to the Baptists of the time was that, while still maintaining high requirements for admission,

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[41] *Letters*, VI, 236.
[42] *Works*, VIII, 226.
[43] *Works*, VII, 209.

they allowed those who had lapsed from their Covenant to remain. He argued that "if no man ought to be admitted into a church or congregation, who has not actual faith and repentance; then neither ought any who has them not, to continue in any congregation." To allow this, he said, was a practical renunciation of the Baptists' main principle.[44]

The *General Rules* close with an injunction that the Societies took very literally: "If there be any among us who observe them not, who habitually break any of them, let it be made known unto them who watch over that soul, as that they must give an account. We will admonish him of the error of his ways: we will bear with him for a season. But then if he repent not, he hath no more place among us." There can be no question that the early Methodist Societies, while remaining an adjunct to the Church of England, were organized like many of the sects of the seventeenth century.

They had rejected "a natural ethic, whose standards differ greatly from those of Christianity"; they had evolved their social ideal from the Gospel and the history of the early church. They had banded together to demonstrate to the world the truth of "whole Christianity" by a consistently followed way of life.

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[44] *Works*, VIII, 183.

[45] See Ernst Troeltsch, *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1931), II, 461 et seq.

Book Reviews

Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion, by Peter A. Bertocci. New York: Prentice-Hall, 1951. 565 pages. $4.75.

A copy of this work was presented to the reviewer by the author, his former teacher. The book is designed to meet the need of students who, "coming from courses in literature and in the physical and social sciences," bring "with them many questions involving values, the nature of truth, the compatibility of religious faith with the findings of science, and the nature of man and his destiny." (vii)

Obviously, the purpose of the first chapter is to help students coming from various religious backgrounds to adjust themselves to a liberal religious atmosphere. All of them, liberals and conservatives included, in the opinion of the reviewer, should remember "that what we have believed may not be the final answer . . . and that our own solution to date may be immature and uncritical," as "mental maturity does not come from accepting or changing religious beliefs," but "from facing honestly the problems which religious beliefs were intended to solve." (7)

In the opinion of this reviewer the author at times gives expression to a narrow view of faith: "To believe (in God or in any being) implies that one is prepared to act on the postulate that he is correct though he realizes that he may be wrong in his opinion or judgment." (23) This is an expression of Kant's practical reason, but not of his distinction between opinion (*Meinung*), belief (*Glauben*), and knowledge (*Wissen*). Nor is it the expression of Kant's conviction toward the close of his life: *"Gott in mir, um mich, und über mir."* (See *Opus Postumum*) Saint Paul declared in no uncertain tone, "I *know* (present) whom I have believed" (perfect), indicating that he had not ceased being a believer when he became a knower. While belief and knowledge are different, they are also alike; no sharp line divides them. A knower is only a more intense believer. Aquinas viewed faith as the highest form of knowledge. The author himself was impressed by a modern example of St. Paul's certitude, for he said that he never would "for-

get the look of quiet assurance on the face of a friend who remarked . . . that he had 'found God on a hillside.' " (42) But again Dr. Bertocci defines faith in a similar way: "the willingness to act in accordance with the most reasonable hypothesis." (82) Later he grants that religious faith is also the product of religious experience. But the distinction is not clearly drawn between the faith that initiates and controls the experiment and the faith that is the result, or the knowledge that comes by verification. In the mind of the reviewer much confusion on the subject of faith would be avoided if it were seen in its full sweep as pre-hypothetical, hypothetical, and post-hypothetical.

With Dr. E. S. Brightman, our author holds that the only logical certainty possible is the experience of the momentary self. But in declaring that reason is the guide of life, he did not help his cause by equating this with the saying, "Probability is *the* guide of life." For as a dogmatic denial of any other guide of life, it is self-contradictory, certainty being used to deny certainty. It is usually attributed to Joseph Butler, but probably was uttered long before (and significantly) by Carneades the skeptic. Often it is quoted with all the dogmatism of a divine pronouncement—a very inconsistent use of a probability statement. As quoted, it makes Butler inconsistent and self-contradictory, for he also said: *"It is certain* (not "I am certain," which would have been psychological and not logical certainty) that doubting implies a degree of evidence." Then those who quote it fail to read the whole sentence: "Probability is the guide of life, *where more satisfactory evidence cannot be had."* (*The Analogy of Religion,* 3) And Butler applies this explicitly to religious certainty: "This alleged doubtfulness concerning religious matters" may be "man's own fault." (Ibid., 351) No wonder that this doctrine of probability that used to pass as "legal tender" is being questioned and qualified today!

But apparently in line with his narrow view of faith and with his conception of probability, Dr. Bertocci declares: "The claim to immediate knowledge is untenable." (93) It is made clear that this is not a denial of all cognitive value in religious experience, nor an expression of hostility toward mysticism. But the reviewer would point out that there are a number of philosophical theologians who see *some* cognitive content in the immediate experience of God. (See Hocking's doctrine of the polarity, not opposition, of feeling

and knowledge.) Many see the dependence of the mediate upon the immediate. And it would seem that if the feeling of God's presence were mere feeling with no implicit ideas in it, then the knowledge of God due to later reflection would be inexplicable. The reviewer, although holding that the mystical experience is one of mediated-immediacy, agress with Dr. Bertocci that one should not treat his own religious experience as an *independent source* of knowledge about God. For the Bible has much to say about God, and is a reliable source of information. It may be viewed as a record of immediate "contacts" of men with God, presenting a body of accumulated knowledge about God, the product of a vast religious "experiment" conducted through the ages. The "holy men of old," who "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," came into the immediate presence of God.

The writer gives an excellent treatment of "the wider teleological argument," which "rests not on the specific, restricted evidence of design and fruitful adaptation, but on the interconnectedness of physical nature, life, and human experience." (331) There are seven "links" in the chain of this argument: purposive interrelation of matter and life, relevance of thought to reality, interrelation of moral effort and the order of nature, interrelation between value and nature, this world as good for man, and significance of aesthetic and religious experience as confirmatory.

The author speaks of the break with the Western tradition on God which has occurred within the last fifty years, *i. e.*, a break with the view that "the fundamental structure of God has to be *thoroughly* and *totally* immutable and totally perfect." (315) The author himself seems concerned about the problem that creation poses, *i. e.*, how an eternal, immutable being could be related to time and yet not undergo change. To the reviewer, Miley is helpful at this point: "He is immutable in the plenitude and perfection of His personal attributes . . . Definite and varying acts of personal agency, and new facts of consciousness, such as must arise with the personal energizing of will in his creative and providential work, are entirely consistent with such immutability." (*Systematic Theology*, I, 221)

Bertocci calls for a synoptic vision of the attributes, and then, with no indication that he is giving a tentative or hypothetical definition, he defines omnipotence as "the power to do all that is

worth doing." (322) Then after speaking of God's goodness in creating men as free beings, he writes: *"Orthodox Christian thought, therefore, justly used the word omnipotence to express the fact that God was not limited by anything other than his own purposeful choice."* (324) Please note "justly" here. He reiterates his belief that "there is nothing in his (God's) nature or beyond which can keep him from realizing his purpose." (390) Yet in spite of all this, he later comes out as an advocate of Dr. Brightman's view of a finite God. We are urged to appeal to facts. But if we ignore the perfect revelation which God has made of Himself in the Christian Scriptures (which makes possible personal acquaintance with Him), and turn to the inadequate revelation of Him in nature, is it not true that we are more impressed by evidences of power than of love? The reviewer is convinced that the philosophers who have held the Christian view of God did not get it through a process of reasoning but directly or indirectly from the Bible. John Stuart Mill, who saw no attributes of God in nature, concluded that the net result of natural theology (reasoning on nature alone) in this regard is nothing. The same Book that describes God as all-loving pictures Him as all powerful. The author wonders why the burden of proof falls on the one who challenges the notion of God's omnipotence. Here is one answer. By rejecting the Christian Book as authority on the subject, he is challenging the traditional Christian view (if not *the* Christian view). The burden of proof or action falls on the one who seeks to sit in the seat occupied by another.

How does Dr. Bertocci go about trying to "unseat" the traditional view? He raises the question about the presence of evil in the world. A high point is reached when he writes that if God had created puppets "which would execute his purposes as rapidly as do atoms or ants" thus approving a universe "without co-creators in value, he would have done less than the best." (360) With Keats (and Bosanquet) the author views the universe not as a "vale of tears" but as a "vale of soul-making", and concludes that when one thinks over the whole argument for a personal, *all powerful* Creator, "he can understand why so many acute thinkers have held that this is the best of all possible worlds." (408) He states that God preferred to suffer rather than to be sure that His will would be done at the expense of human freedom and responsibility. (361) The author makes it clear that his contention that the world is good for

man is central to the whole argument of the book. But after all this he decides that a God of absolute power could have made a better world. But in the light of his assertion that the omnipotence of God can be supported only by appeal to actual evidence we ask, is this his method of proving his case? Apart from the unempirical attitude of ignoring the body of facts, the cumulative testimony of those personally acquainted with God (including His own Son), the author talks of "excess evil" and "the natural evil which produces more harm than good." In whose eyes? In the eyes of an omniscient God? In the eyes of *all* finite thinkers? "He states: "There is no way of knowing whether any particular evil which is at this point superfluous in the world is a means to some greater good." (414) But is there any way by which man can *know* that any particular evil is "at this point superfluous," restricted as he is to part-vision? Ferré who once championed belief in a finite God, now warns against "freezing the process", *i. e.*, judging the construction by the view of the rough scaffold rather than of the beautiful temple being erected. We repeat, the burden of proof is on the author.

Like some advocates of the belief in a finite God, Bertocci seems to try to "put all his eggs in one basket", and to make it appear that the absolutists have done the same: "The traditionalist claims that all evil performs a moral function." (396) The fact is that various explanations have been given for the presence of evil in the world; when taken together, they are convincing to many thinkers, who hold that it is not necessary to solve every problem and "at all cost," and that these "neat solutions" of the problem of evil (such as the theory of a finite God) only create other and greater problems. And is it not true that if one did solve this problem of evil that he would thereby make himself God and leave no room for faith in the sense in which the author uses the word? Certainly, the one who turns away from the record of men's dealings with God throughout human history to the present, and who, claiming to look down into the depths of God's nature, finds an irrational and evil "surd" there, has not only left the realm of empiricism for that of speculation, but has made a claim that the one who should know God best, His own Son, never made, and has placed irrationalism at the heart of the universe, as Dr. Harold

DeWolf has pointed out. If rationalism is not part of the structure of our world, if what appears irrational to us as finite creatures is really irrational, then how can we trust the testimony of human reason?

In conclusion, then, a question and a statement: Has our author by his arguments for a finite God given the most reasonable explanation for the presence of evil in our world, or has he destroyed our confidence in all his reasoning found in this book? The statement is to clear up a misunderstanding: belief in a finite God is not an essential part of personal idealism.

EARL E. BARRETT

The Atom Speaks and Echoes the Word of God, by D. Lee Chesnut. Grand Rapids, Mich: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1951. Illus., 232 pages.

It is refreshing to find a book dealing clearly and simply with as complex a structure as the atom and at the same time extoling the virtues of Him by whom all things have been created.

Mr. Chesnut is an electrical engineer and at present employed by the General Electric Company. This book has grown out of numerous lectures given to civic and church groups in the last few years.

In the first few chapters of his book, Mr. Chesnut takes his reader from the immensity of space into the submicroscopic structure of the atom. This journey is taken rapidly but each step is clearly explained. Then he very definitely shows God's power in the atom when it refuses to act according to the laws man has formulated for it. By this time the author has so shown God's might that one is not exclaiming,! "Isn't the atom wonderful," but rather "Isn't God powerful!".

Next Mr. Chesnut explains in as plain language as possible the principle of the atom bomb and then follows it with an application of the chain reaction to an interpretation of IIPeter 3:10-11. Again the reader feels the authority of the Scriptures as he reads.

Using the discussion of Transmutation of the Elements as it is now done in the large research laboratories with the cyclotrons and similar atom smashers, Mr. Chesnut introduces the reader to

not only the possibility of a new heaven and a new earth, but the certainity of it.

One chapter ministers will particularly find enjoyable and valuable is the one in which all of Christ's statements regarding a variety of subjects are quoted. Some of the topics dealt with are: Is there a "hereafter"? If so, how long does that next life last?; What is to be our mental and physical state?; etc.

Analogies are always treacherous and especially those combining science and religion; however Mr. Chesnut has done an amazing job in the concluding chapter. He has drawn analogies from science to illustrate Redemption, the Trinity, Miracles, Christ—Both God and Man, immortaly, and several other similar topics.

The laymen interested in the inter-relationship of science and religion will find enjoyable and profitable reading in this book. The minister will find authoritative statements and illustrations for sermon material. All will find their respect for God's Word magnified and their love of God deepened by the reading of *The Atom Speaks and Echoes the Word of God.*

C. B. HAMANN

Rediscovering the Bible, by Bernhard W. Anderson. New York: Association Press, (Haddam House), 1951. 272 pages. $3.50.

The author served Methodist Churches in California and Congregational Christian Churches in Conneticut. He later became Professor of Bible at the University of North Carolina where most of the book was actually written. At present he is professor of Old Testament Interpretation at Colgate-Rochester Divinity School. In this volume he seeks to view the Bible in such a manner as to make it challenging to modern thoughtful youth. It is a young person's "guide to an understanding of the Bible." The viewpoint of the author is that of a neo-liberal or neo-orthodox scholar, probably the former. Inasmuch as its general content was discussed with college students, chapter by chapter, the book the more reflects the student viewpoint.

In its organization the chapters follow the sequence of the Bible—from Genesis to Revelation. It is in no sense a book by book commentary; instead, certain phases of Biblical history are discussed, problems are faced honestly and issues stated lucidly. There are

ten chapters with such titles as "The New World of the Bible," "Israel comes of Age," and "The Power of His Resurrection." In each the author comes directly to the points at issue in comparing modern man's attitude toward the world and the Biblical attitude. Difficulties to faith are dealt with in a manner sympathic of the Biblical viewpoint and of a vital Christian faith. The volume is nicely printed and bound and comes with some documentation of source material and with a helpful index.

Essentially this is a book on apologetics. To the reviewer one of the most commendable features of the volume is the directness and clarity with which youth's problems in reading the Bible are handled. The author points out the shortcomings of the crass literalism of the "fundamentalist" on one hand and the rationalizing of the conventional, "orthodox," Protestant liberal on the other. Refreshing indeed is this author's repudiation of the liberals' attempts to "modernize" the Bible by changing its concepts into something more palatable for western "scientific" minds. His own viewpoint is akin to that of Alan Richardson (*Christian Apologetics*) and Paul Minear (*Eyes of Faith*). After noting the oriental nature of the Bible, and the difficulty of taking the Bible, especially the miracles, literally, he saves the day for Christian faith by concluding that the Bible is credible on the basis of faith if not on fact. He would thus emphasise the importance of the reader's *viewpoint*. The rationalist interprets the Bible in the framework of his personal viewpoint and explains away its supernatural nature. The Christian, however, from the vantage point of his faith, can reconstruct the Biblical message, leaving out extraneous materials and cleaving to the spiritual meaning. The strongest feature of the book is probably its recognition of the nature and purpose of the scriptures, the fact that they are Oriental in origin and reveal God in action.

Many readers will find difficulty in following Professor Anderson as he surrenders on one hand the claim of the Bible to be accurate and factual and yet maintains that faith is independent of factual fatters. He never clearly indicates what faith is or on what it is based. He misses the point entirely in thinking, for instance, that the faith and apologetic of the early church did not rest upon verifiable evidences. How does one get "eyes of faith" by which

to resolve the difficulties he encounters while studying the Bible? It would seem that most young people would be a loss to know how to get into rapport with the Biblical writers and share their convictions. How does one get this "faith"? Although much more wholesome and "sound" than liberalism, it still is neo-liberalism on a rather unstable foundation. Nevertheless, here is a readable, very stimulating volume, important because representative of a wholesome trend.

GEORGE ALLEN TURNER

The Bible Basis of Missions, by Robert Hall Glover, M.D., F.R.G.S. Los Angeles: Bible House of Los Angeles, 1946. 208 pages. $2.50.

Few men have been more qualified to write a book on the subject of missions than Robert Hall Glover. First published in the year before his death, this excellent, practical volume is the product of a rich, full life devoted to the cause of missions. Dr. Glover completed his medical training in 1893 at New York University, went to China in 1895 as a missionary, and later served as Home Director of the China Inland Mission. He also wrote the authoritative volume entitled *The Progress of World Wide Missions,* first published in 1924 and now in its fourth edition.

The word "missions" appears in the title of every one of the ten chapters, and is considered in relation to the Bible, the Holy Spirit, the Apostle Paul, as well as the church, pastor, Christ's return, men, money, and prayer. A concluding chapter gives a striking analogy between "The 'Little Lad' and Missions". As Dr. Samuel M. Zwemer declares in the introduction, this study has an explicit theology and a basic philosophy. "We have had manuals on missions that stressed sociology, psychology, and even ethics, but left out theology except in tabloid form . . . The only missionary motive that is not smitten to pieces by the atomic bombs of rationalism and neo-paganism in our day is the apostolic mandate of the New Testament, with all of its implications and sanctions." (p. 7,8) In contrast to "re-thinking missions" which proposes substituting a human philosophy for the divine revelation, our author approaches the subject from the same angle and with the same con-

viction as that taken by Dr. Hendrik Kraemer of the Madras Conference in his volume, *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World*. Both men stand in awe before the fact of a final revelation and the unique finality of Jesus Christ.

The missionary character of the Scriptures is forcefully presented. The salient features of New Testament missions as exemplified in the Apostle Paul are set forth in respect to his missionary commission, conviction, message, ambition, career, suffering, and passion. In their God-given office of leadership in the church, the home pastors are the key to the missionary problem. The essential elements of a missionary call are helpfully discussed in the chapter on "Men and Missions." The vital place of prayer in the missionary enterprise is stressed.

One of the valuable aspects of this volume is the warm-hearted presentation of the entire discussion. Obviously, the author's heart glows with love for Christ and a passion for souls. The book is marked by clearness of expression, depth of thought, logical argument, and close adherence to the Scriptures. It has proved helpful to pastors, missionaries, and laymen as a source of information and inspiration.

WILLIAM M. ARNETT

Biblical and Theological Studies, by Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield. Edited by Samuel G. Craig. Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1952. xlviii plus 590 pages. $4.50.

An attempt has been made to enhance the value of this collection of B. B. Warfield's works by adding a "biographical-theological sketch" of the writer. Actually the biographical section is very brief. On the other hand, it is doubtful whether the main part of this preface would impress anyone who was not in full agreement with the theological opinions of the author. While it does state the theological bias of B. B. Warfield, it unduly emphasizes the controversial issues before the reader has the opportunity to examine what the author has to say. Some readers who will be drawn to this book by the the quality of Warfield's other works may perhaps be prejudiced against this volume by this theological sketch.

The position of Warfield in regard to the authority and inspiration of Scripture draws all Evangelical Christians to him. Apart from some minor differences of opinion, both Calvinistic and Wesleyan theoolgians can find keen interest in Warfield's arguments in defense of the Bible. For this reason the first half of the regular chapters in this work will find general acceptance among the fundamentalist and the conservative groups. These chapters provide a common basis of agreement on the subjects of supernaturalism, the Trinity, the person of Christ, and the personality of the Holy Spirit. A few might disagree with the gap-theory for interpreting the geneologies of Genesis, but no Evangelical will dispute the emphasis on the unity of the race. For many it will be hard to tolerate the author's acceptance of a form of evolution. Others will repudiate everything that he said because of this. However, it must be acknowledged that Warfield never attempted to apply the evolutionary scheme of development to the Old Testament. In every respect he is orthodox in his interpretation of Scriptures concerning inspiration and revelation.

In reality the title of this book is not entirely apropos. The content of the book is much more theological than Biblical. Only a few of the studies can be called strictly Biblical; and even then, the main emphases are theological. Calvinism stands out prominently in several of the chapters. One is not surprised to find that Warfield is strongly Calvinistic. On the other hand, one is not greatly impressed by the arguments presented. The author is not at his best in this area of theology. He presents only one side of the discussion and does not show awareness of the real issues which divide theologians. He elaborates on the Scriptures describing the sovereignity of God in the realm of providence with total disregard for the idea that man may have free will within the limitations of divine providence. In the matter of faith, he reads too much into Scripture in order to support his presupposition that faith is entirely a work of God. Certainly these discussions cannot compare with Warfield's great articles on inspiration.

The sermons which are added provide interest for the students of the man, but they do not add anything outstanding to the field of homiletics.

Calvinistic readers will be enthusiastic about this book. This does not mean that Wesleyan thinkers should not become familiar

with its contents. B. B. Warfield was a tremendous personality and deserves full recognition. It is well that every minister should be acquainted with this volume. No ordinary book would be published thirty-one years after the death of its author.

JAMES WHITWORTH

Pastoral Counseling—Its Theory and Practice by Dr. Carroll A. Wise. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1951. 231 pages. $2.75.

The best book on pastoral counseling to come out of 1951 is that of Dr. Carroll A. Wise, Professor of Pastoral Psychology and Counseling at Garrett Biblical Institute. In it Dr. Wise preaches what he practices, namely, counseling by a clergyman. Too, his preachment to counselors by means of his new book is as helpful as is his practice with counselees in varied situations. The book is worthy of a very careful reading by all those interested in the mountain of pastoral psychology or in the valley of personal counseling. The avowed purpose of the book is to offer an interpretation of pastoral counseling for ministers, theological students, and also for counselors whose work is not in the field of religion.

The book has eight vitally discerning chapters. Chapter One deals with "the pastor as counselor." The author discusses the opportunities for the pastor in counseling, the aim of counseling, the crux of the counseling process, and factors which control the counselor's responses. Chapter Two considers "the person with whom the minister counsels." The language dealing with the nature of personality is that of modern, scientific formulations. The approach is highly eclectic. The purpose is to present a practical approach helpful to the minister or counselor. Chapter Three leads us right into "the counseling relationship." The counselor is urged to consider his own feeling and attitude—a difficult task—and warned against setting rigid principles for all counselees. The factors of rapport, acceptance, freedom, mutuality, dependence, and responsibility, limitations, and growth of the counseling relationship are expressly considered. "Counseling and the growth process" engages our attention in Chapter Four. Counseling is seen

to be an experience which takes place within the total dynamic life process, not outside nor apart from it. Certainly, counseling should never be thought of as application of a given set of techniques to a personality. Various problems are brought into view: the directive or non-directive approach, the means of communication (especially verbalization), counselor responses, problems in technique, handling guilt, talking about past experiences, giving reassurance, and with whom the pastor should counsel. Chapter Five leads us to "insight as the goal in counseling." Insight is defined, four levels of insight discussed, and interpretations and techniques considered which are clinically very useful. In Chapter Six, we come to "counseling and the Christian faith." Perhaps this chapter leaves most to be desired, as one might guess. Yet several unique values are emphasized in the discussion of the correlation between counseling and such issues as attitudes, resources, personality, love, forgiveness, faith, and prayer. Both Chapters Seven and Eight deal with "some aspects of pastoral work and counseling." Inasmuch as pastoral counseling is a process of helping people with feelings and attitudes that are causing difficulty the worthy volume closes with rich suggestions of the most pertinent and practical nature relative to pastoral visitation, premarital counseling, counseling on Christian vocations, counseling with the physically ill or the grief-stricken (such as in the case of bereavement), and counseling on manifest religious problems.

To those interested in improving their pastoral counseling or lifting in from mere religious routine to more scientific and spiritual service we recommend this book. Incomplete? Perhaps. Yet what creation of man is not? Practical? Pertinent? Yes!

ROLAND V. HUDSON

10,000 *Biblical Illustrations,* by Charles E. Little. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House. 632 pages. $4.95.

This volume was previously published as *Biblical Lights and Sidelights.* It is worthy of reprint. Here gathered together in encyclopedic form and under practical headings are a multitude of topics, reference to which will greatly facilate the work of building sermons. Grouped together under each one of the hundreds of

topics treated are nearly all the varied aspects of that topic so far as they are to be found in the Bible. Such Bible furnishing, in convenient form, of the many-sided phases of a topic is one of the most valuable features of the book. The illustrations are all in the form of Scripture quotations, with citation of book, chapter, and verse. In addition to this, all *related* illustrations for any given topic appear in cross-reference form in small type. As the compiler states, the plan of the book assumes a general knowledge of Biblical history on the part of the reader. A textual index at the close shows at a glance where in the volume any particular verse is to be found. All topics and related topics are arranged alphabetically to dispense with a separate topical index usually found at the end of such volumes.

The Bible is the richest source book of sermon illustrations. 10.000 *Biblical Illustrations* is a most convenient medium for reaching these nuggets of gold.

JAMES D. ROBERTSON

The Craft of Sermon Construction by W. E. Sangster. Philadelphia: Westminister Press, 1951. 208 pages. $3.00.

Anointed To Preach, by Clovis Chappell. New York: Abington-Cokesbury, 1951. 124 pages. $1.50.

Go Tell The People, by Theodore Parker Ferris. New York: Scribners, 1951. 116 pages. $2.00.

The past year has set a record for the number of books published about the preacher's craft—a testimony to the revival of interest in preaching. Three of these books are briefly reviewed herewith. Sangster's is undoubtedly the most significant of them all. The eminent preacher at London's Westminster Central Hall wrote the present volume by popular request. *The Craft of Sermon Construction,* which has had wide sale in England, is likely to gather a large audience on this side of the Atlantic. The strength of the book lies (a) in the timeliness and force of its major emphasis—the technique of sermon building—(b) its convincing exposition of the centrality of preaching in the work of the ministry and (c) its general fertility of expression. Here is the kind of read-

ing that maintains interest to the end. True, much of it has been said before but never more succinctly or with more arresting comment. A book that will guide the beginner aright and challenge and refresh the professional.

At the end of one of the most popular ministries of our day, and after publishing at least twenty-five books of sermons, Clovis Chappell gives us in six chapters his idea of preaching. It is natural that we examine with more than usual interest this treatise which should represent the best gleanings of a long and fruitful ministry. The writer discusses the preacher's call, illustrating its validity from his own experience; the prime emphasis of his calling, preaching; the sermon, its preparation and characteristics; the hour of worship, which he calls "Our Finest Hour"; and finally, "Keeping Fit," an appeal for a well-rounded development of mind, body, and soul. Like the rest of Chappell's writings this book is crystal clear in statement and eminently practical. Rich allusions to the author's experience add much to its value. But because of the author's long experience in preaching and writing, and because of the exalted title that he gives the book, one looks for a more substantial treatment to the theme.—A "thin" volume that should prove both interesting and instructive as far as it goes.

Go Tell the People was originally delivered as a series of lectures by the rector of Trinity Church, Boston, at Seabury-Western Theological Seminary in Evanston, Illinois. This book deals mostly with the sermon: its purpose, content, and form. A final chapter discusses personal problems of the preacher. Here is a resourceful text adapted to the needs of the contemporary pulpit. It should inspire a man in his calling and tone up his sermons, if they need it. Striking observations are profuse such as this one, "One of the reasons why so many sermons are ineffective is that they are written largely in the imperative mode. They are exhortations, not proclamations. They are the Watch and Ward Society speaking, not the Town Crier." (p. 19) The weakness of homiletical texts is that they furnish abundance of maxims on the art of preaching yet fail to illustrate these rules in operation. Ferris is not guilty at this point. For instance, "Let us now take each one of these four types of sermon and follow the course of its preparation...." And thus he makes the abstract concrete. It is altogether praiseworthy that modern writers are returning to an emphasis on the

mechanics of the sermon. This writer devotes two of his five chapters to the problem of sermon form. He does so, too, minus that pedantry so typical of the older treatises on homiletics which repelled as it instructed. As with Chappell, one could hope for a fuller discussion of the topics in hand; yet Ferris' more restricted range permits more adequate treatment of the ones he does have. An informative, inspirational little book for both younger and older preachers.

JAMES D. ROBERTSON

Christ In The Old Testament, by Timothy Walton Callaway. New York: Loizeaux Brothers, 1951. 191 pages. $2.25.

The author, one in a long line of Callaway Baptist preachers, tells us that his aim "is to make Christ in the Old Testament informative, simple, and easy to understand, doctrinally scriptural, interesting and glorifying to Christ." It is refreshing to see a book that correlates the Old Testament with New Testament doctrines. Dr. Callaway points out that truths of salvation formulated in doctrines are the result of the whole historical process through which revelation has passed.

In light of the still used but outmoded JEDP hypothesis it is interesting to see how this author meets the Jehovah-Elohim problem in Genesis. The first chapter is entitled, "Jehovah of the Old Testament the Christ of the New." It is the writer's thesis that Elohim refers to God the Creator, the God-head, the Three in One, while Jehovah is He who manifests himself to man. Later Jehovah was incarnated and became known to us as Christ the Anointed One. Throughout the book the point is made that Jehovah in the Old Testament and Christ in the New are one and the same.

In Chapter Two comparison is made between the first Adam, man and the last Adam, Christ. In Chapter Three Christ the redemptive seed is traced from Genesis to Matthew. Tracing this topic with the author is a rich literary adventure full of Biblical evidence. The author graphically shows how Satan has attempted to destroy this divine Seed in every age and generation but without success. Space permits only the listing of the remaining chapter headings: Christ as the Angel of the Lord; Christ in the Taber-

nacle; Christ the Pascal Lamb; Christ and the Offerings; Christ, Calvary and Resurrection; Christ: Prophet, Priest and King; Christ and the Feasts in Leviticus; Christ in Isaiah; Christ in Prophecy; Christ as the Shepherd; Christ and Isaac; Christ and Joseph; Christ and Moses; Christ and the Book of Joshua; Christ and Escatology; Christ and Israel; Christ the "Rock"; Christ and Virgin Birth; Christ and Security in the Old Testament; Christ and Judgment in the Old Testament; and Christ in Genesis and Revelation.

Dr. Callaway presents great fundamental Biblical truths that need to be studied and preached. All Bible believing Christians will rejoice at the reading of this book. Only on the chapter on Security will some of us beg to differ.

We heartily recommend this book to laymen and ministers alike. Every Christian should have this wonderful treatise as a guide to Bible study. It is well documented with Scripture references.

H. A. HANKE

Here I Stand; A Life of Martin Luther, by Roland H. Bainton. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1950. 422 pages. $4.50.

Monk in Armour, by Gladys H. Barr. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1948. 256 pages. $3.00.

Here I Stand is the portrait of a veritable giant who, though beset by human frailties, lived by great principles. The title is appropriately chosen from Luther's declaration before the Diet of Worms asserting the authority of the Scriptures and the freedom of his conscience. The earliest printed version is said to have added: "Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise."

The author has established his reputation as a scholar of ecclesiastical history, and this biography gives evidence of careful research. While there are no footnotes, there is an extensive list of references and a nine-page bibliography at the end of the book. The addition of an index makes the book usable for quick reference. A feature which adds to the interest of the work is the inclusion of Renaissance drawings and engravings selected from Dr. Bainton's own hobby collection. These reflect the customs and

the temper of the times and lend a distinct atmosphere to the book.

Paradoxical as it may seem, this biography is at once scholarly in treatment and popular in style and is enjoyable reading. The author is obviously sympathetic with his subject but succeeds singularly in avoiding the two pitfalls of the biographer: the halo effect and the debunking tendency. Since both the strength and weakness of Luther are here present the reader feels that he is meeting Luther as he was in real life.

In reading *Here I Stand* one obtains a growing appreciation of the stature of the man who dared to raise his solitary voice against the ecclesiastical evils of his day. "Are you alone wise and all the ages in error?" was the thrust which came from his critics in those early days when he protested the sale of indulgences. His insistence on such matters as the priesthood of all believers, personal faith of the communicants, and the authority of the Word bespeaks real fortitude.

Great souls have great temptations, and so it was with Luther. His whole lifetime was a fight for faith as he struggled against "Anfechtungen" in which Satanic power was very real. "Don't argue with the Devil", advised this stalwart soldier of the cross, "He has had five thousand years of experience. He has tried out all his tricks on Adam, Abraham, and David, and He knows exactly the weak spots." In the year of his deepest depression he penned the immortal lines of "Ein' Feste Burg is Unser Gott," a hymn which has inspired courage in thousands of "angefochtenen" believers.

In the closing chapter, the "Measure of the Man," the author covers that last quarter of Luther's life when he was under the ban of both Church and empire, a period which was "neither determinative for his ideas nor crucial for his achievements." In this chapter Dr. Bainton mentions impartially some of the less favorable aspects of Luther's life.

It is the purpose of this review to stimulate interest in this very fine biography. To ministers, the contenders for the faith of our day, it will bring great inspiration and challenge. To laymen it will occasion a new appreciation of the great and costly heritage that is Protestantism.

Mrs. Barr's *Monk in Armor* is a fictionalized biography of Luther which makes easy and inspiring reading for younger read-

ers. It is noncritical in its approach and of course makes no pretense to be exhaustive. For busy people who wish wholesome historical fiction, this novel merits attention. The reader might then be induced to follow up with Bainton's book for a more scholarly and factual treatment.

SUSAN SCHULTZ

The Drift of Western Thought, by Carl F. H. Henry. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1951. 164 pages. $3.50.

This is Carl Henry's latest book. In it are the W. B. Riley Memorial Lectures for 1951 which Dr. Henry delivered at the Northwestern Schools in Minneapolis.

Theologians, though an argumentative breed, are agreed on the importance of philosophy. Philosophy is fundamental; philosophy is practical. If you think of philosophy as being little more than the abstract emanations of armchair theorists self-exiled to a never-never world, read this book. The "durable divides" of history are not geographical or political, Dr. Henry points out, but ideological. He traces the vital linkage of scientific naturalism, the dominant *world-view* of the west, through renaissance humanism with its emancipation of reason, through medieval scholasticism where reason was subordinated to an all-inclusive ecclesiastical authority, back to its sources in ancient Greek thought. Surveyed in this way history fits together inevitably and makes admirable sense.

The splintering of thought into irreconcilable and hostile camps ranging all the way from orthodox Christian theism to the naturalistic nihilism of Communism is one of the striking features of our time. With a sure hand the author untangles the primary strands in the philosophic lineage of these competing views and relates them to the facts of the Christian revelation. He answers decisively four principal objections made to the Christian revelation-claim: (1) that it is impossible, (2) that it is superfluous, (3) that it is immoral in that it involves a divine favoritism and unfairness, (4) that it is intolerant bigotry. Dr. Henry's survey includes Roman Catholicism, Modernism (including die-hard liberalism), Neo-orthodoxy, Humanism and Naturalism. Of particular interest is his

appraisal of Neo-orthodoxy. Barth and Brunner are right in their emphasis on human sinfulness and on divine transcendence, but neo-supernaturalism fails to reflect faithfully the Biblical doctrine of divine immanence. Under fire also by Dr. Henry is its doctrine of revelation-by-crisis involving a denial of any objective propositional revelation in the Scripture.

A valuable section of the book is that in which the author distinguishes between the different meanings of the same theological term when used by different schools of thought. The concepts of God, revelation, the nature of man, and regeneration, so frequently and so ambiguously used, are given a precise and unambiguous meaning-content characteristic of each view.

The author sees philosophy and Christianity as distinct and separate, yet with the closest relations to each other. Christianity can learn from philosophy what are the perennial questions man has asked about himself, about his past and future. Christianity can answer many of them directly, and others by implication. But, though not technically a philosophy since it claims to be a communication direct from God Himself, Christianity has much to teach philosophy. Christianity claims authoritative knowledge of man's origin, his moral nature, the conditions of his present existence, his relationship to God, and his eternal destiny. The great deficiency of philosophy has always been at the point of human sin; but in contrast, it is just here that the Biblical revelation is most full and explicit. The great theme of the Bible is man's moral revolt and the Divine initiative taken in consequence of that revolt.

Dr. Henry is a Calvinist, a professor of Theology and Christian Philosophy at Fuller Theological Seminary. He holds a high view of Divine sovereignty yet insists on responsible moral choice as a central element in man's salvation. He writes vigorously and with purpose. He aims not only to explicate; he is also an advocate. Had he stated a thesis for the book he might well have phrased it, *the uniqueness and finality of the Christian revelation.* There is argument here, good clean thinking, hard-hitting and cogent. It is like a fresh wind blowing away stale air. Dr. Henry sets the evangelical Protestant understanding of the Christian revelation against all other views and vindicates it on the basis of its own claims and purposes as given in Scripture. Christianity specifically *is not* the highest expression of a universal essense; it is unique;

it is different in kind. God has given to man a once-for-all revelation in Jesus Christ and in a plenarily inspired Bible; He has done here what He has done nowhere else, and there is no other name whereby men may be saved.

If you are familiar with Dr. Henry's books and enjoy him (as this reviewer does), this book will delight and invigorate you. He has an enviable facility of expression. He exhibits genuine scholarship. In some respects Dr. Henry brings to mind C. S. Lewis, *e. g.*, his emphasis on the particular and the unique in Christianity. Henry has not the imaginative genius of Lewis, and does not employ his more subtle attack from the flank; his is rather the frontal assault, methodical, inexorable, like an army that sweeps all before it, vanquishing each enemy by the power of revealed truth.

RALPH D. LOWELL

The Royalty of the Pulpit, by Edgar DeWitt Jones. New York: Harpers, 1951. 447 pages. $5.00.

In undertaking to furnish an adequate interpretation and appraisal of the Lyman Beecher Lectures on Preaching, held annually at Yale University, the author has produced a treatise that should be in the library of every student of preaching. In its seventy-five-year history the most significant American lectureship on preaching has drawn to its rostrum from the best ministerial talent in this country and in England. The survey begins with Henry Ward Beecher in 1872 and ends with Leslie Weatherhead in 1949.

Gathered in this volume are colorful and oftentimes intimate sketches of the lecturers. Done without stiffness, they constitute one of the most attractive features of the reading. Men who were but a name become alive, partly because of the author's vigorous style and partly because twenty-seven of the men were known personally to Dr. Jones. The work is replete with penetrating, scintillating insights into the heart of the lectures, implemented generously with apt quotations. As Halford Luccock says in the foreword, "(Jones) does not need to carry a stethoscope around with him to tell whether an idea or fact is dead. He can detect the details that wriggle with

life. He has the nose of a beagle hound for a fox, when it comes to selecting quotations."

Seeing now for the first time the lecture series as an organic whole, we can better grasp each man's peculiar mission and more intelligently appraise his contribution to the whole. The wide scope of the lectures is at once evident from the author's classifying the lecturers in kindred groups such as Olympians, Theologians and Philosophers, Prophets of Social Change, and Shepherds of the Flock (eleven of them in all). This classification, however, is not to the best advantage of the student of the history of preaching primarily interested in preaching trends. But the present treatment, while not exactly scientific, does make for a readable volume void of the tedium so often characteristic of chronological arrangement.

Incidentally, here is a list of some outstanding works in theological literature that were originally Yale Lectures in Preaching: Phillips Brooks' *Lectures in Preaching,* Henry Van Dyke's *The Gospel for An Age of Doubt,* George Adam Smith's *Modern Criticism and the Preaching of the Old Testament,* George A. Gordan's *Ultimate Conception of Faith,* Charles Sylvester Horne's *The Romance of Preaching,* and Reinhold Niebuhr's *Faith and History.*

JAMES D. ROBERTSON

By The Finger of God, by S. Vernon McCasland. New York: The MacMillan Company, 1951. 146 pages. $2.75.

Dr. S. Vernon McCasland, Professor of Religion in the University of Virginia, is the author of a new study of Demon Possession and Exorcism in Early Christianity in the Light of Modern Views of Mental Illness. The author's effort is directed to the bringing together of the discoveries in various fields, particularly the field of the new science of psychiatry, and to making this body of material available to New Testament scholarship.

Demon possession, according to Dr. McCasland's thesis, is an ancient expression of mental illness. There has been much misunderstanding of the New Testament records dealing with demon possession because readers have assumed that events are referred

to in these accounts which have no parallels outside of the Bible. The author finds that the interpretation of mental illness as demon possession occurs in many different cultures of ancient times and also that the diseases of the mind which are reflected in the Biblical accounts are "all too common in our own hospital."

The author seeks to approach his subject scientifically and therefore avoids theological pronouncements. He is frank to assert that his method in dealing with the New Testament accounts is that of Form Criticism. While it is true that one must have a knowledge of the environmental factors in which the gospels were written, many will have difficulty in following Dr. McCasland in too large an acceptance of the "results" of Form Criticism.

Demon possession is further examined in the light of Palestinian and Greek backgrounds, folklore, modern examples of exorcism and the observations of modern psychiatry. The closing chapters of the book have to do with statements concerning the defying of Jesus by demons, the use of the name of Jesus by the early disciples in exorcism, the methods used by Jesus, and the relationship of Jesus' exorcisms to the Messiaship.

Only four New Testament cases are dealt with because these alone are presented fully enough in the record as to appear to be diseases of the mind, that is, "a partial or complete change of personality in the person said to be possessed." The four cases described are the Gadarene demoniac, the epileptic boy, the man at Capernaum, and the maid at Philippi. The first of these is observed by McCasland to be manic-depressive and the last two are said to be hysteria.

The author is persuaded that the gospel records for the most part are not folklore, for these records stand up well with first-hand accounts of exorcisms. For example, on page 63 there is found the statement, "most of the gospel stories have no features at all which comparative folklore finds to be legendary."

In concluding this brief but very valuable study Dr. McCasland says, "The tradition about Jesus as an exorcist is trustworthy in its essential features." This activity of exorcism has something positive to say concerning the meaning of the Messiaship.

W. D. TURKINGTON

The Biblical Illustrator: Matthew, by Joseph S. Excell. Grand Rapids: The Baker Book House, 1951. 688 pages. $4.95.

The Baker Book House has placed the biblical world under a great debt once more in the tremendous undertaking of reprinting *The Biblical Illustrator.* The first volume on Matthew will be ready for distribution on January 31, 1952. The book has been published in an excellent binding, with good quality paper and is printed in clear, easily legible type.

Those who are acquainted with the earlier edition of the *Illustrator* will know that Dr. Joseph Excell, who is the editor, has brought together in this work the best thought of many of the outstanding biblical scholars and great preachers of other years. Here is a work that will prove of large value to ministers and Bible teachers.

W. D. TURKINGTON

The Methodist Heritage, by Henry Caster. London: The Epworth Press, 1951. 246 pages.

The present volume, *The Methodist Heritage,* grew out of an inquiry, "what new or renewed Confessional obligation to the accepted Church ought to be recognized and accepted" by Methodism? "What is there in Methodist history and experience which bears directly on the new endeavor of Christ's Church on earth to recover her unity, to bring together her scattered spiritual wealth, to proclaim her Head as Lord, Redeemer and Renewer of Mankind?" If any adequate answer were to be arrived at there must be a re-examination of Methodism's original message and mission. The Methodist Heritage represents the result of such a re-examination.

The book is written from the standpoint of a British Methodist and therefore the author does not presume to speak for world Methodism. There is a feeling, however, that there is relevancy in the study for all Methodists everywhere since there is a pointing back "to the rock from which we were hewn" and a concern with the issues which confront us all.

The book is introduced with a prologue in which "the great new fact of our era," the ecumenical movement, is set forth. The

true relation of Methodism to this movement is to be discerned in its history and chiefly in the Evangelical Revival of the eighteenth century.

The main section of the book is divided into two parts. Part One deals at length with the heritage of the Wesleys, John and Charles, while Part Two discusses the heritage bequeathed by the Wesleys from the family in Epworth is said to have been the love Wesleys from the family in Epworth is said to have been, the love of the Bible, the Book of Common Prayer and the way of life which was found in the Epworth rectory.

The two brothers, John and Charles, received the "Inheritance" of a personal experience of salvation by faith in Christ at approximately the same time. Charles on May 21, 1738, and John on May 24, 1738. Beginning with this experience these founders of Methodism went out to become "servants of mankind."

There were certain shaping influences along the road that brought these men to the inheritance—Luther, Peter Boehler and the Moravians and the literature of devotion from both Catholic and Anglican sources. There were controversies also through which the new experiences of the Wesleys were explored, controversies over the means of grace, assurance of divine forgiveness, the freeness of saving grace and more particularly over Christian Perfection. These items had to do with the doctrinal foundations of Methodism.

The Wesleyan Movement, in order to "develop the inheritance," introduced a ministry of the laity which was unique. There was also a recognition of social obligations, obligations which would make the fellowship real and which set up very definite standards of personal conduct, and which further insisted on certain responsibilities in public affairs.

In Part Two of the book, the author points out that the inheritance which the Wesleys bequeathed to their own and later generations, in their own and other lands, was a body of doctrine concerning Christian experience and conduct derived from close and continuous Biblical study and tested afresh in the laboratory of daily life. Secondly, they bequeathed a new religious organization which was founded and developed to broadcast this teaching—an

organization known in Britain as the United Societies of the People called Methodists and in the United States as the Methodist Episcopal Church.

In developing the doctrinal contribution attention is called to Wesley's first concern, namely, "the damning fact of universal sin," which called for the "porch of religion"—repentance—and secondly "the door of religion"—faith. This faith is "a faith in Christ" which is a full reliance on the blood of Christ, a trust in the merits of His life, death and resurrection. This saving grace of God is "free." In this item Wesley parted company with Calvinism. There is assurance of divine forgiveness. This was one of Wesley's cardinal contributions. The emphasis here grew out of his own experience of forgiveness.

Finally, in the discussion of doctrinal inheritance the author deals with what Wesley was pleased to term "religion itself" or Holiness. "Scriptural holiness" is "the great salvation" and is distinguished by Wesley from conversion. The life of holiness is a new way of life, it is inward religion, a quest for "full redemption" and is further the life of a true neighbor. Thus Wesley's position on the life of holiness was that it is both personal and social.

The Methodist Heritage represents a wide and thorough-going study in Wesleyana. The author accomplishes in most excellent fashion his purpose to indicate the contributions which Methodism with its doctrinal positions and methods of operation may make to the ecumenical movement in this day.

W. D. TURKINGTON

The Soncino Chumash. Edited by A. Cohen. Hindhead, Surrey, England: The Soncino Press, 1947. 1203 pages. $6.00.

For the preachers who knows a little Hebrew, no commentary can take the place of the set published by the Soncino Press. It is a distinctively Jewish work edited by A. Cohen. The accepted Hebrew text is printed in a parallel column to the American Jewish version. This arrangement provides a convenient way to compare the Hebrew text with the English.

Following the natural order of all Hebrew writing, the commentary begins at what non-Semitic people think of as the back

of the book. For this reason the work may be a curiosity to English speaking people, but this does not detract from its value to the Christian minister. The comments given in the lower part of each page merit the highest commendation. They are clear, enlightening, and to the point. No irrelevant material is included, and all technicalities of language have been omitted. For perfection of style, the comments can hardly be improved.

The volume having to do with the Pentateuch is entitled *The Soncino Chumash* from the common Jewish designation for the Torah. In Aramaic the Books of Moses are designated as the "Five-fifths of Torah." The word for "fifths" has been adopted as the title of this Soncino publication.

The learned doctors who contributed the different divisions of the *Chumash* are: Rabbi H. Freedman, the Reverend J. Rabbinowitz, Rabbi S. M. Lehrman, and Rabbi S. Fisch. Their aim was to give a digest of the works of the greatest Jewish exegetes of the past. They therefore quoted freely from Rashi, Ibn Ezra, Rashbam, Nachmanides, Sforno, Kimchi, and Gersonides. What these scholars say about the text is very informing. There is little, though, with which the Christian minister will disagree.

One feature of *The Soncino Chumash* which will attract the attention of the reader is the inclusion of the *Haphtaroth.* These additional sections are the passages from the historical and prophetic Books of the Old Testament which were read each Sabbath in the Synagogue ritual. Each passage is placed following the reading from the Law with which it was associated, and appropriate comments are given for each verse. At the end of the volume stand the other *Haphtaroth* which were read on the special Sabbaths of the Jewish year. These, however, have neither comments nor English translations. An interesting insight into Jewish thought is given in the *Haphtaroth* which adds to the worth of the commentary.

While Cohen's work will appeal more strongly to those who know Hebrew, it can be highly recommended to those who do not. The comments given are well worth the price of the book.

JAMES WHITWORTH

Ezekiel, Commentary on the Holy Scriptures. Edited by John Peter Lange. English edition by Philip Schaff. Translated by Patrick Fairburn, William Findlay, Thomas Crerar, and Sinclair Mason. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, n.d. 492 pages plus 273 pages on Daniel. $4.95.

Some ministers of the age just past will not appreciate the publication of another volume of Lange's *Commentary.* In an age of shallow thinking, it is much easier for the popular preacher to dip into a homiletical grab bag and snatch a few sparkling bric-a-bracs to ornament a gaunt skeleton from the accumulation of some dead pulpiteer's closet. It would be a blessing if all such sermonizers were buried with their fruitless past.

There are many portents that a new day has arrived, for a resurgence of Bible preaching has manifested itself in the past few years. The publication of Lange's *Commentary* is encouraging evidence of this present trend. When the prospect of reprinting Lange's work was mentioned to one of the leading homiletics professors of the present day, he sugested that the publishers were in danger of losing their investment in such an adventure. This will certainly be true if there are not enough Bible scholars to buy the books. It is the hope of those who love Bible preaching that a new generation of hearty Bible students will arise to search diligently God's Word.

The Reverend F. W. J. Schröder's contribution to Lange's *Commentary* is a comprehensive exegesis of the Book of Ezekiel. In a time of globular unrest, it is well for the preacher to turn to this prophet of the exile, for in the words of Ezekiel can be found the answer to the perplexities of the atomic age. The people of the captivity came to the prophet with the predicament which seemed to have no justification. Why should God allow his chosen people to suffer as they did? Ezekiel gave a satisfying solution to the problem of evil in the realm of national life. It is this same message which the sick world needs today. The minister has not fulfilled his duty until he has interpreted the message of Ezekiel to this jittery generation.

But how can the preacher learn to preach from Ezekiel? It cannot be said that Lange's *Commentary* on Ezekiel will outline the sermon that is needed. There is no easy road to Bible preach-

ing. The best sermons can only be prepared by hard work. However it can be said that this work will prove to be an invaluable tool in accomplishing the task.

The mental discipline of digging out the exact meaning of the prophecy with the aid of Schroder's exegetical remarks, does something of incalculable worth to the minister. Without such a grueling process, there can be no truly great preaching. Reading in this commentary is not always easy, but it is worth all that it costs.

No recommendation of a commentary could be better than the fact that it seeks to explain the correct intent of a text. Frequent references are made in this work to the original Hebrew. One cannot rightly divide the Word of Truth without staying close to the original; however the student does not have to know Hebrew to make good use of Lange. It is important to seek a commentary that will explain the Hebrew.

A large part of Lange's exegetical comments came from the best Bible scholars of the past. These include rabbinical writers, patristic fathers, and reformation leaders of the highest type. A few of the more recent scholars mentioned have been associated with destructive criticism, but this does not necessarily minimize the value of their unbiased exegetical comments. Their liberal presumptions rarely tint this particular type of exegesis. On the other hand, many comments are given from outstanding scholars who are known for their conservatism.

An important part of the commentary is the section of doctrinal remarks which are thought provoking. Great satisfaction is derived from the emphasis on the glory of God in the visions of the creatures and the wheels. In all such cases most questions have been handled judiciously. A number of different views are presented without any dogmatic statement as to the significance of various symbols. When it comes to the matter of free will, the Arminian has to part company with the writer who tries to distinguish between falling from righteousness and falling from grace. In this significant issue the Calvinism of the commentator is not too greatly emphasized.

In addition there are commendable homiletical hints which are not altogether to the liking of the anemic preacher. Rather than furnishing canned sermon materials, these hints are designed to

stimulate the mental processes. The results accrued from such helps are worth far more than embellishments from other sources.

It would be wrong to expect everything from Lange's *Commentary,* for in itself it can produce only an aridness which will create death. Bible preaching must have life and fire in it, or it becomes impotent. However, the factors which make preaching dynamic may lead to fanaticism if they are not combined with scholarship. The need of the hour is for scholarship on fire. There is ruin in either extreme. A commentary such as this can only provide the grist which the scholar may grind. The reaction of a minister to Lange will reveal what kind of a preacher he is. Every Bible preacher will want a copy in his library.

JAMES WHITWORTH

In Training, a guide to the preparation of the missionary. Based on material left by the late Rowland Hogben. Edited by A. T. Houghton. 2nd ed. revised. London: Inter-Varsity Fellowship, 1947. 188 pages.

In any spiritual church there are those who feel that their place of service for God is on the foreign mission field. Many of these do not have a clear understanding of all that is involved in such work and make ill-advised attempts to follow their inclinations. It was the purpose of the veteran missionary, Rowland Hogben, to present the immensity of the task of adequate preparation as a guide *or* a deterrent to those attracted to a missionary career. Mr. Hogben himself trained many missionary candidates. Even at the time of his death (in a motor accident on the Burma Road in 1942) he was leading some new recruits into China.

Following the author's original design for the book, the editor has incorporated along with the author's work ten chapters contributed by other writers, including Norman Grubb and Alexander McLeish. The subjects covered by these collaborators make the book well worth a pastor's recommendation to a missionary-minded member of his congregation.

Especially rewarding are the chapters on the qualifications and character of a missionary. Their keen analysis of missionary personality should provoke serious and prayerful consideration on

the part of prospective missionaries. Mr. Hogben lists eight missionary qualifications with well-illustrated discussions of each. Particularly illuminating is the author's treatment of the themes, "Tact in dealing with men, and adaptability towards circumstances," "Zeal in service and steadfastness in discouragement," and "Some experience and blessing in the Lord's work at home."

The general coverage of the book and especially the chapter "Work on the Field" and those chapters dealing with health and language study are reminiscent of A. J. Brown's well-known book, *The Foreign Missionary*. The discussions in Hogben are far from exhaustive, a factor which perhaps constitutes the main weakness of the book. Brown's classic is more suitable for those already preparing for foreign service, whereas *In Training* is designed as an elementary guide to those still seeking to know the Lord's will for their lives.

The book, written from a high spiritual level with many Scripture references, may well accomplish its task of winnowing from the army of prospective missionaries those who are possessed only of a passing, misguided desire for a romantic calling.

FREDA CARVER

Christian Education in a Democracy, by Frank E. Gaebelein. Oxford University Press (1951).

This work is the report of a committee of the National Association of Evangelicals through its Commission on Educational Institutions. The title, *Christian Education in a Democracy,* capitalizes on Dr. John Dewey's *Democracy and Education.*

While the book is largely written by Dr. Gaebelein, certain chapters were contributed by members of the committee. The twelve chapters of the work deal with aims, the Christian school, the public school, the independent school, the Christian college, the Bible school, the teacher, the church and education, Christian education and the home, Christian youth, and "a look ahead."

The introductory chapter deals with prevalent religious and moral conditions, attributing them largely to the absence of religious teaching in the schools. In this report America is considered as a democracy rather than a republic. As a democracy it is not Chris-

tian, for the average citizen is a thoroughly secular person, but Christianity must interact with democracy as it exists although not pragmatically for Christianity is authoritative in the sense of certainty. The foundation of Christian education is the orthodox conception of Jesus Christ. This conception includes the basic historical doctrines of Christendom, but it also includes the translation of them into life.

A Christian school is one which is based upon a Christian philosophy of education; a faculty thoroughly committed to that philosophy; a Christ-centered curriculum; a student body loyal to such a Christian program; recognition of the required and voluntary aspects of Christian education; the Christian ethics in deals and practice.

In looking at Christian education and public education, both formal and informal procedures are recognized. Within education are the avowed secularists or naturalists and the supernaturalists. Between these extremes are many shades of opinion and belief. With such divergence of views how can religion, a matter of faith and life, be taught in the public school? Within certain limits it can be done. There may be in the public school devotional reading of the Bible, also its academic use. Incidental religious instruction may be given and indirect influences may be exerted. Church and state cooperation have been proposed, such as the giving of public school credit for Bible courses, and the released time plan has been quite popular. But the fact remains that effective religious education cannot be provided in the public schools. Since religion cannot be taught in the schools any anti-religious teaching should be prohibited.

Agencies teaching religion are enumerated to show that religion is not out of the public mind, but the home, the church and the Christian school must be the agencies in Christian education. Independent Christian schools are proposed. Also, Christian colleges should be maintained on both the junior college and terminal levels and graduate and professional training levels. The Christian college should serve all who can profit by higher education, a higher education in which the organizing principle should be revealed truth. Christian colleges must be intellectually worthy and provide the best in higher education. Since the 1880's more than 160 Bible

institutes have been founded, enrolling 25,000 students. They are without exception evangelical. Nyack Missionary Training Institute was founded in 1882, and Moody Bible Institute began as the Chicago Bible Institute in 1889. The secularism of the church-controlled college has made the mission of the Bible school more significant. As to the Christian teacher, he should be well balanced and have intellectual ability. A deeply spiritual life is basic.

The chapter on the church as educator reviews the history of the Sunday School movement to the days of spiritual decline. The trend to substitute psychological adjustment for spiritual regeneration has created a grave cleavage between the modern religious education movement and evangelicalism. Contemporary liberal trends such as the Barthian movement are cited. The Evangelical Teacher-Traing Movement cited and the National Sunday School Association founded in 1946 are named as contemporary evangelical Sunday School agencies.

Christian education in the home is stressed. The chapter on Christian youth is summarized in a cryptic sentence: "Only youth firmly grounded on the Rock of Ages has the foundation for the fullest and most creative study of the problems of our times."

What problems confront Christian education? There is the problem of methodology and evangelical teaching. There is the need for more schools which are genuinely Christian, including a Chris- for more schools which are genuinely Christian, including a Christian university. The practical, social application of the Gospel must be stressed. Christian education must be directed to the needs of the local church. More and better teachers must be recruited and prepared.

This reviewer feels that the book is not sufficiently clear and explicit as to the sources of the prevailing secularism in education. The true meaning and purpose of so-called "progressive education," "creative activity," etc., are not sufficiently emphasized. "Learning to do by doing" is rather a Pestalozzian and Col. Francis Parker concept than a "progressive" education contribution, just as project teaching is a vocational training or industrial acts methodology taken over as a "progressive" education technique.

HAROLD C. MASON

The Redeemer, by William Ragsdale Cannon. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1951. 224 pages.

The author of this book states his purpose as "an attempt to deduce the personality of Jesus Christ from a study of his work;" (7) i. e., "For us, at least, what he does decides who he is. We cannot disassociate the doer from the deed." (11) No narrow view of the work of Christ is taken: "The measure of the consequences of his career in and upon human history is after all the measure of his personality." (11) Further: "If he possesses a name which is above every other name, it is simply because he performs a work which excels every other work." (11) The author appears to be correct in his conclusion that the traditional doctrine of the person of Christ is not a theological abstraction, but "the result of the reflection of the Church upon its own experience as that experience has been produced by the Spirit of its Lord." (12)

This is no new Christology. Redemption is made central in the work of Jesus Christ. Dr. Cannon is in line with the trend today when he brings together what the liberals used to separate—the "Jesus of history" and the "Christ of faith." Each chapter is a consideration of our Lord's redemptive work, each stated tersely—Man, Prophet, Judge, Priest, Teacher, Leader, Ruler of Nature, Sacrifice, Life, God. "Belief in the divinity of Christ follows as a consequence of Christ's execution of the work of redemption." (14) The author shows that both the modernizing and the eschatological interpretations of the career of Jesus are out of harmony with the role subsequent history has given Him; grapes do not grow from thorns.

As Judge, Jesus is pictured as the revelation of man to himself; "through his disclosure we learn that we are sinners, the objects of the wrath and indignation of God." (54) Paradoxically, the Judge is also Priest, representing man to God.

Dr. Cannon touched on a topic that needs to be made clear today—the relation of faith and grace:

> But to equate faith with grace is in reality to destroy it; for if it be made both the means whereby man claims the gift and at the same time itself a gift from God, then the merit of its belonging to man is entirely gone, and the distinction between him who gives and him who receives is for all practical purposes obliterated . . . Either faith is an entity of human personality entirely different from grace, and man through the exercise of

this faith is a vital and determinative factor in his own deliverance, or else the action of God in the process of salvation is all the action there is, and the divine Being is entirely responsible both for those who are saved and those who are lost. (82)

Likewise, the Barthians seeking to exalt the grace of God, actually debase it in another respect:

For in disparaging the righteousness of men who by faith have laid hold of the mercies of the Almighty, they set at nought the effectiveness of God's own work . . . When we say that the man of faith is still a sinner, and his perfection consists only in his hope, then we admit either that the God who forgives sin is indifferent to its nature and allows to continue the very evil which he pardons or else that God has no control over unrighteousness and is unable to save a man from the sin which he despises. (86)

Against Barth's conception of the historical Jesus as a very ordinary man, the author points to the Christian Church as the proof of the leadership of Jesus Christ in the world. Speaking of Christ as the ruler of nature, Dr. Cannon declares that "to Christian faith Jesus of Nazareth has cosmic significance," (126) for not only as leader of men but as Lord of life he directs our earthly career and determines our eternal destiny. His miracles are expressions of this cosmic significance; against the idea of their impossibility, the author appeals to the testimony of history in general, and adds: "Certainly we cannot come to an understanding of Jesus if we rob him of his miracles." (132)

A Calvinistic touch is added to the discussion on Christ as sacrifice by the use of the unscriptural word "punishment." This reviewer would prefer Miley's phrase—"conditional substitute for penalty."

The last chapter gives the crowning picture of Christ as God. A very fine distinction is made in the statement: "To say that Christ is God and yet to refuse to say that God is Christ is to indicate that the being of God is such that that being contains Christ within it and yet is not exhausted by him." (203) But perhaps it is unwise to view the Trinity as "three distinct individuals" and to seek an analogy in "interpersonal humanity"; for, as the author grants, "the nature of humanity is altered by its particularized individuations." (207) Furthermore, the phrase "three distinct individuals" belies the unity of the Trinity. As Wiley has shown, the Church guards against the error of supposing this unity to be

similar to that of human nature, for whereas in man it is only generically the same, in the Godhead it is both generically and numerically the same; "otherwise we should have three individuals or three Gods." (*Christian Theology,* 424) The doctrine of circumcession which guards the unity of the Trinity by maintaining that the Persons permeate or dwell in each other (thereby sharing the one nature while experiencing social unity in plurality) forbids the concept of "three distinct individuals."

On the whole, *The Redeemer* is Arminian and Wesleyan, as well as conservative, and is a timely production.

EARL E. BARRETT

Our Contributors

DR. NELS F. S. FERRE is Professor of Philosophical Theology at Vanderbilt University School of Theology. An author and lecturer, he is a Fulbright lecturer at Oxford University for the school year 1951-52.

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Much of this endeavor is made possible by the recent gift of the Kabis III scanner, one of the best available. The scanner can produce more than 2,900 pages an hour and features a special book cradle that is specifically designed to protect rare and fragile materials. The materials it produces will be available in ebook format, easy to download and search.

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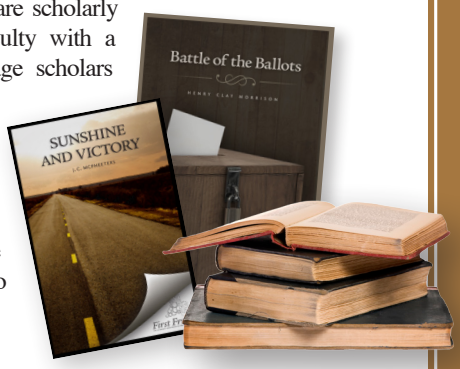

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